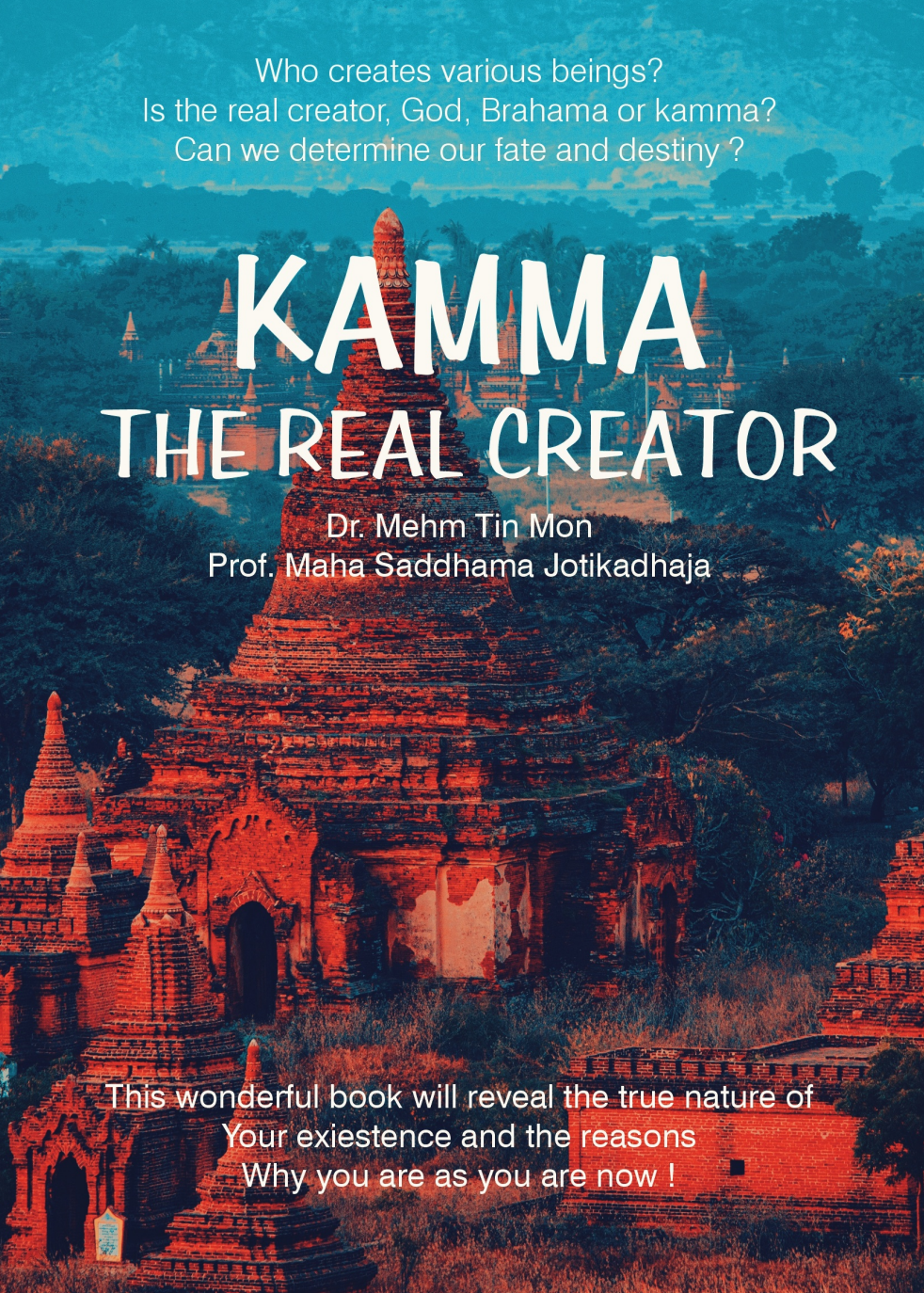

Who creates various beings?
Is the real creator, God, Brahama or kamma?
Can we determine our fate and destiny ?
KAMMA
THE REAL CREATOR
Dr. Mehm Tin Mon
Prof. Maha Saddhama Jotikadhaja
This wonderful book will reveal the true nature of
Your exiestence and the reasons
Why you are as you are now !

- Who creates various beings ?
- Who determines the fate and destiny of various beings ?
- Is the real creator a God, Brahma or Kamma ?
- Can supernatural phenomena exist in nature ?
- Can we determine our fate and destiny ?

KAMMA, The Real Creator

Dr. Mehm Tin Mon

Professor, Mahā Saddhamma Jotikadhaja

Make the right view your guiding torch to steer your life towards prosperity and happiness.

Buddha Sāsanaṁ ciraṁ tiṭṭhatu

Religious Publication Permission No. (3204260607)
Cover Design Permission No. (3205180807)

Publication 2007, October
First Printing, 1000 Copies

•

Publisher Mehm Tay Zar Mon
Yadanar Min Literature (3455)
15/ 19, U Wisara Housing Estate
Dagon Township, Yangon.

•

Printer U Tin Maung Win
(Cover+contents) Thin Lai Win Press (05946)
No. 1, Bo Yar Nyunt Street,
Yaw Min Gyi Quarter,
Dagon Township, Yangon.

•

Distribution Mya Mon Yadanar Literature
15/ 19, U Wisara Housing Estate,
Dagon Township, Yangon.
Tel : 9 - 51 - 385261

၉၀၀ ကျပ်

CONTENTS

Page

*** PREFACE**

1 What is the most Important Thing in Life ? 11
2 Some Important Life Problems 12
3 Who could Answer these Life Questions ? 13
4 The Analysis of the Mind 15
5 The Mind and Kamma 17
6 The extremely powerful Law of Kamma 19
7 We can Shape our Fate and Destiny as We Like 21

1 What Existence Means

1 What is Existence ? 25
2 Different Kinds of Existences 28
3 Who Creates various Beings 30
4 The Discovery of Science 33
5 Test-tube Babies 35
Human Cloning 37

2 The Deep and Subtle Life Puzzle

1 Can Life come from Matter? 42
2 The Gene Theory 42
3 The Past Existences and the Future Existences 44

[3] Evidences for Past Existences

1 Persons who Remember their Past Existences 48
2 Infant Prodigies Exist all over the World 51

3 Remembering Past Existences by Age Degression thorough Hypnosis 52
The Miracle Man, Edgar Cayce 54
Life Readings which are more Exact than Astrological Charts 57
A Maiden Telegraph Operator 58
4 Knowing Past Existences through Supernormal Power 58
The Revellation of the Buddha 60
5 Knowing Past Existences in Insight Meditation 63

4 **Evidences for Future Existences**

1 Evidences from the Buddhist Canons 67
2 The Investigations of Venerable Mahā Moggallāna 74
3 Contact with the Dead through a Medium with Psychic Power 75
Mrs. Leonora Piper, a White Crow and a Benefactor 78
Estelle Roberts and the Spirit Red Cloud 80
The Secret Message between two Lovers 83
Still Remembering from the Spirit World 84
Communication between the Public and their dead Relatives 86
4 Direct Contact with Dead Persons 89
Lovers from different Worlds can be together 91
A Message from the Spirit World 94
5 Knowing Future Existences with Divine Eye and other Supernormal Powers 95

5 **Who the Real Creator Is**

1 The most Powerful Agent 102

2 The View of Psychologists 103
3 Is the Mind the Brain ? 103
Abhidhamma Explains the Working of the Mind 107
4 Who is the Real Creator ? 111

6 **What Kamma Is**

1 What is Kamma ? 115
2 How does Kamma Arise ? 117
How do Kammas Arise from the Actions of the Mind? 122
3 The Simile of the Elephant King Saddan 123
4 Two Types of Kamma – Conascent Kamma and Asynchronous Kamma 128
5 Three Types of Kamma Doors 130
6 Ten Kinds of Unwholesome Actions 131
Conditions for Completing an Action 132
7 Ten Kinds of Wholesome Actions 135
8 Ten Bases of Meritorious Deeds 137
9 Where do Kammas Exist ? 138
6 How do Kammas Condition new Existence to Arise? 140

7 **How Do Kammas Bear Results ?**

1 The Habit of Looking at Immediate Results 145
2 Two Types of Results in every Action 146
3 The Way Asynchronous Kammas Bear Results 150
The Way Kamma Bears Results similar to It 150
4 Bearing Results a Billionfold 153
Isn't it Guilty to kill an Animal ? 154

The Beauty Queen of Vesālī 157
To Be Prosperous in Every Successive Existence 158
5 Why People are Different from One Another 160
6 The Mentality and the Materiality Produced by Kammas 165

8 Different Kinds of Kammas

1 Four Classes of Kammas Consisting of four Types of Kammas each 168
2 Four Types of Kammas with respect to Function 169
(i) Janaka Kamma – Productive Kamma 170
(ii) Upatthambhaka Kamma – SupportiveKamma 170
(iii) Upapīḷaka Kamma – Obstructive Kamma 171
(iv) Upaghātaka Kamma – Destructive Kamma 173
The Operation of the Four Types of Kammas on Devadatta 174
3 Four Types of Kammas by Order of Priority 175
(i) Garuka Kamma – Weighty Kamma 175
(ii) Āsanna Kamma – Near-Death Kamma 177
The strange Kammas of the Water-pot-stand Lady 178
How a Son can Help his Father to Gain Blissful Rebirth 181
(iii) Āciṇṇa Kamma – Habitual Kamma 182
(iv) Kaṭattā Kamma – Unspecified Kamma 184
The Simile of a Cattle Compound 184
Born in Avīci Hell in spite of many Good Kammas 186
4 Four Types of Kammas with respect to the Time of Bearing Results 187

(i) Diṭṭhadhamma-vedaniya Kamma – Immediately Effective Kamma 188
The Kamma Results cannot be Avoided 190
The Generous are Rewarded in this very life 191
(ii) Upapajja-vedaniya Kamma – Subsequently Effective Kamma 192
(iii) Aparāpariya-vedaniya Kamma – Indefinitely Effective Kamma 194
The Echo One Made Returns to Oneself 197
Indefinitely Effective Kammas Follow like one's Shadow 200
(iv) Ahosi Kamma – Defunt Kamma 200
5 Four Types of Kammas with respect to the Places where the Effects Arise 201
(i) *Akusala Kamma* – Unwholesome Kammas 202
(ii) *Kāmāvacara kusala Kamma* – sense-sphere Wholesome Kammas 202
(iii) *Rūpāvacara Kusala Kamma* – Fine-material-sphere wholesome Kammas 203
(iv) *Arūpāvacara Kusala Kamma* – Immaterial-sphere Wholesome Kammas 202

9 The Mind is the Real Creator

1 The Mind is the Real Almighty Agent 205
Marvellous Mundane Supernormal Powers 206
2 The Amazing Properties of Supernormal Powers 206
Making What is Far Near and What is Large Small 208
Making What is Much Little and What is Little Much 209

Turning Darkness into Light and Revelation of Worlds 210
The Creative Power of the Mind through Kamma 213
3 The Way Akusala Kamma Bears Results 213
4 Two-rooted Meritorious Deed and Three-rooted Meritorious Deed 215
5 Inferior Kamma and Superior Kamma 216
Great Meritorious Deed with little Benefit 217
6 Three Kinds of Human Beings 218
7 Differentiation of Rūpa Brahmās 221
8 Arūpa Brahmās with only Mental Entities 225

10 **Death and Rebirth**

1 Why are Living Beings Alive? 229
2 Why do Living Beings have to Die? 233
3 How do Signs Appear just before Death? 233
Three Types of Near-death Signs 233
The Near-death Sign may Change 235
Celestial Chariots Arrived just before Death 236
4 How does the new Existence Arise after Death? 237
5 Is the Person in the New Existence the Same as the Person in the Present Existence ? 241
6 The Evidences that Verify a Single Mental Stream 243
The Arising of Divine Eye and other Supernormal Powers 246
Pondering on the Principle of Dependent Arising 247
Evidences for Transmission of the Properties of Conciousness and Mental Factors in the Mental Stream 251

11 The Right to Create One's Fate and Destiny Freely

1 The Free and Just Kamma Doctrine 254
2 Three Kinds of Basic Wrong View 256
3 One Should Rely on Oneself 258
4 The Way to Success and Prosperity 260
5 The Couple who Met great Loss due to the Lack of Wisdom and Effort 264
6 Those who Reach the Top with good Present Kamma, Wisdom, and Effort 266
7 The Opportunities for Good Kammas and Bad Kammas to Bear Results 271
8 You will be Miserable if You Associate with a Person of Bad Kamma 274
9 You will be Prosperous if You Associate with a Person of Good Kamma 278

12 The Very Deep and Subtle Kamma Law

1 The Deep and Subtle Nature of Mental Entities 280
2 The Nārada Jātaka Illustrates how Strangely Kammas Bear Results 283
By Knowing just One Previous Existence One cannot Understand the Law of Kamma 286
Evil Deeds Multiply due to Wrong View 289
Princess Rucā gave a Moralizing Talk to her Father 290
Brahmā Nārada delivered a Sermon 295
Showing Hells and Celestial Realms 298
The Simile of a Chariot that Fulfils all Wishes 301
3 Why some People Prosper with Bad Deeds and Some are Poor in spite of Good Deeds 303

Evil Deeds will never Bear Good Results 306
4 To be Rich and Prosperous in Every Existence 308
Good Kamma is more Powerful than Bad Kamma 310
Let Kamma, Wisdom and Effort be Balanced 312
5 Let us Swim across Saṁsāra together till We Reach the Safe Shore 315

PREFACE

1 What is the most Important Thing in Life?

The teaching of the Buddha is very marvellous. We should thank him most heartily for expounding the natural truths that are unkown to philosophers, psychologists and scientists.

The most important thing in life is the mind. It is the mind that rules the whole world. The mind controls all our thoughts, all our speeches and all our actions. Consequently it controls the whole world.

> *If we can control just one thing, that is our mind, we shall enjoy the human happiness, the celestial happiness and the supreme happiness of Nibbāna..*

Psychologists also acknowledge that the mind has infinite power and that it can accomplish anything. We can see from the rapid, great advances in science and technology that the ability of the mind to create wonderful things is unlimited; indeed the sky is the limit! But psychologists do not understand what the mind really is.

Scientists can investigate only physical phenomena involving matter and energy and based on the physical laws they have discovered, they are creating and producing many wonderful machines and luxurious goods. They have sent many space ships to study planets and have set up a space station for space research. But they have not studied the mind yet and they could not build an instrument up till now to investigate the mind. So scientists can bring about only material progress, but not the mental progress.

Only the self-enlightened Buddha knows the mind exactly in every aspect.

2 Some Important Life Problems

Why are people suffering from mental pain? Why are they worrying about many things? Why do they grieve and weep so often? Why do they have frequent disappointment and mental depression? Why do they get angry, confused and wicked? Why do they suffer from mental tension, mental stress and strain, mental disorders and bodily ailment? Why do men try to cheat men, to torture men and to kill men? Why do they wage wars causing many deaths? Why is not the world at peace? Why do people like sensual pleasure and indulge in sense enjoyment too much? Is there any essence in sensual pleasure? How can we know that there is woeful suffering behind sensual pleasure?

Do we have previous existences before the present existence? When we die, shall we be reborn again? Who creates various kinds of existences? Why are people different in wealth, health, appearance, intelligence, fate and destiny? Does an Almighty God control the human fate

and destiny? Can't we have the right to create our fate and destiny as we like? What is the most important thing to do in the present life? What should we do to enjoy prosperity and happiness life after life?

These are some important problems in life. **Leo Tolstoy,** 1829-1910, the well-known Russian writer and religious philosopher, who won the Nobel Prize with his great novel "*War and Peace*", considered by many the greatest novel ever written, pondered over some problems: "How did my present life come into existence? Why am I alive? Shall I be reborn again after death? What kind of existence shall I become? These questions are certainly very important. As I cannot find the answers to these questions, I feel that the place I am standing on collapses."

Many top philosophers have considered about these deep and subtle problems. But they could not give rational answers.

3 Who could Answer these Life Questions?

The Buddha is really the knower of all things. He has given satisfactory rational answers to all these questions since the time of **Thales,** 624-550 B.C., the ancient Greek philosopher, regarded as the father of the western philosophy. Where did he give the answer?

The Buddha gave the full answer to all world problems in Tāvatimsā celestial realm in the Great Era 110 (578 B.C.) when he expounded the Abhidhamma discourse. He also gave guidance to **Venerable Sāriputta,** his right-hand chiefdisciple, who was foremost in wisdom, on Abhidhamma so that the latter could expound the Abhidhamma

discourse in the human realm simultaneously. The Abbhidhamma discourse expounded in the human realm became the **Abhidhamma Piṭaka.** If a person can study and understand thoroughly even the short summary of Abhidhamma known as **"Abhidhammattha Saṅgaha,"** that is, 'the Essence of Buddha Abhidhamma', he will know the true answers to all life problems.

Why could the Buddha give rational answers? The reason is that he could clearly understand all the natural principles that control the universe and all the ultimate realities, namely consciousness, mental factors, and ultimate forms of matter, that make up mind and body. He could understand exactly and clearly all psychophysical phenonena which are the results of the interactions between the ultimate mental entities and the ultimate material entities in the past, in the present and in the future. Only if one can understand penetratively in minute detail a wide field of vision of psychophysical phenomena pertaining to the three periods of time, can one solve the deep and subtle life problems. The Buddha gave not only theoretical principles but also practical instructions for 45 years that will lead to the cessation of all suffering and the realization in this very life the unique bliss of Nibbāna which is eternal peace and happiness.

> *"The only path that leads to the attainment of purity, to the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, to the end of pain and grief, to the entering of the right path, and to the realization of Nibbāna is the Noble Eightfold Path or the Noble Threefold Training of morality,*

concentration and wisdom."
(Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta)

4 The Analysis of the Mind

The Buddha gave instructions how to develop mental concentration and how to discern the mind which is so powerful and most diffcult to see. He also gave the method how to analyse the mind into its components. The mind is not a single entity but a combination of consciousness *(citta)* which is the awareness of sense objects and several mental factors *(cetasikas)* which depend on consciousness for their arising and influence consciousness in several ways.

Among the total 52 mental factors there are 14 evil ones called ***immoral mental factors.*** Again among these immoral mental factors there are ten **defilements** *(kilesās)* which defile, debase, inflict and burn the mind. They are responsible for all mental suffering and for all evil actions in the world. The three leaders of immoral mental factors are greed, anger and ignorance.

Greed *(lobha)* – desire, craving or attachment; it is also known as *'taṇhā'* in the sense of 'attachment' and *'rāga'* in the sense of taint or defilement.

Anger *(dosa)* – mental roughness or harshness, hatred, ill will, aversion; it is the most destructive element.

Ignorance *(moha)* – ignorance of the true nature of a sense object, the nature of truth and the nature of kamma; it is also called *'avijjā,* in the sense of darkness.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

These three mental factors are **'immoral roots'**, that is the roots of all immoral actions. An "immoral action" is one which is blame worthy for it causes harm to some living beings and which brings bad results. Because people's minds are influenced by these three immoral roots, they perform unjust actions, violent actions, wicked actions, and immoral actions. These immoral roots defile and debase the mind; they are the hottest fires in the world. If they can be uprooted and destroyed totally, the unique bliss of Nibbāna can be enjoyed immediately.

There are 25 **beautiful mental factors** that influence the mind to be good. They are more numerous and more powerful than immoral mental factors. If they can be unitedly developed to be very powerful in strength, they can suppress and eradicate immoral defilements.

The three **'moral roots'** that oppose the three immoral roots are greedlessness, hatelessness and wisdom.

Greedlessness *(alobha)* – non-craving, non-attachment, generosity.

Hatelessness *(adosa)* – mildness or gentleness, non-hatred, good will, tolerance and forgiveness *(khantī)*, loving-kindness *(mettā)*.

Wisdom *(amoha)* – penetrative insight to the true nature of a sense object, the nature of truth and the nature of kamma; it is also called *'vijjā'* in the sense of 'wisdom'.

These three mental factors are very beautiful and noble. They represent the best qualities of a person. We can develop them by giving alms *(dāna)*, by observing moral

http://www.dhammadownload.com

precepts *(sīla)*, and by undertaking meditation *(bhāvanā)*, respectively.

5 The Mind and Kamma

The mind associated with immoral roots is called an **'immoral mind'.** An immoral mind is one which is blame worthy and which bears bad results.

The mind associated with moral roots is called a **'moral mind'.** A moral mind is one which is blameless and which bears good results.

According to the **'law of conciousness'**, *(Citta Niyāma)*, consciousness arises one after another at a very rapid rate of more than one thousand billion per snap of the fingers or per wink. Thus during the time when an immoral action like killing a fish or stealing other's property is performed, billions of immoral minds arise and perish.

Similarly during the time when a moral action like paying obeisance to the Buddha or offering food to a monk is performed, billions of moral minds arise and perish.

When a consciousness and its concomitant mental factors perish, they transfer their individual properties to the next arising mind before they perish. As all the properties such as the knowledge we have learnt and noted, the feeling we have experienced, etc., keep passing on from one mind to another incessantly, they actually remain in the mental stream. Thus we can recall and still remember what we have learnt, and what we have experienced since childhood. As we can remember the words we have learnt, we can speak to one another.

A very important property is the property of the men-

http://www.dhammadownload.com

tal factor called *'cetanā'* or *'volition'*. *Cetanā* associates with every consciousness. The *cetanā* or volition which associates with immoral roots becomes immoral *cetanā*. The cetanā which associates with moral roots becomes moral *cetanā*.

When an immoral action or a moral action is performed, the *cetanā* or volition makes the intention to do the action and it acts on and prompts its concomitants (consciousness and mental factors) to do their respective functions in order to accomplish the action. For example in killing a mosquito, the *cetanā* sets the motive to kill and prompts the consciousness and the mental factors associated with it to perform their respective functions to kill the mosquito, thus accomplishing the action of killing a mosquito. Since *cetanā* or volition is responsible for accomplishing the action, the Buddha designated cetanā as *kamma = action;* so *kamma is a volitional action.*

For example, in killing a chicken, anger-rooted minds arise by many billions. The *cetanās* or volitions associnted with the many billions of immoral minds are called *'sahajāta akusala kammas.' 'sahajāta Kamma'* means *conascent kamma*, that is, the volition that arises together with the consciousness. These volitions perform the action.

When the many billions of immoral consciousnesses and volitions perish, the volitions leave behind their kamma properties in the mental stream. These billions of kamma properties deposited in the mental stream are called *nanakkhaṇika akusala kammas. 'Nanakkhaṇika kamma,* means *'asynchronous kamma'*, that is, the time the kamma is formed and the time it bears result are dif-

http://www.dhammadownload.com

ferent. It resembles the seed of a plant. It can give rise to a new existence.

Thus during the time an evil action is done billions of unwholesome immoral kammas are deposited in the mental stream, and during the time a meritorious deed is performed billions of wholesome moral kammas are deposited in the mental stream.

The immoral kammas bear bad results starting from the present existence and in every future existence whenever they have the chance to bear results. Thus for killing a chicken a person may have to suffer in hell for a long time and then he may be reborn as animals many times to be killed in the same way as he has killed the chicken.

The moral kammas bear good results starting from the present existence and in every future existence whenever they have the chance to bear results. Every strong moral kamma has the potential to produce a human existence or a celestial existence. Thus the billions of moral kammas that are deposited in the mental stream while a lady pays obeisance respectfully to the Buddha will condition many blissful extences to arise.

Since an evil action or a moral action can give rise to bad results or good results a billionfold, **bad kammas are very dreadful whereas good kammas are very reliable.**

6 The extremely powerful Law of Kamma

'Kamma' is a property of the mind which is most powerful in the world. Moral minds give rise to good kammas and immoral minds give rise to immoral kammas. These

http://www.dhammadownload.com

kammas are transmitted from one mind to another and so they are in the mental stream. At the time of near death the many billion kammas that are in the mental stream compete with one another to have the chance to condition the arising of the next new existence. At the time of death the successful kamma will start producing its resultant consciousness, associated mental factors and kamma-born matter which constitute a new existence in an appropriate realm.

At the time of death and rebirth, soon after the dissolution of the death consciousnes in the old existence, the rebirth consciousness arises in the new existence without any break in the mental stream. So all the kammas and other properties that are in the mental stream of the old existence will be transmitted to the mental stream of the new existence. If the person is reborn as a human being, his mentality, temperament, attitude, etc., will be more or less the same as those of the former person. The kammas are transmitted from one existence to another in the mental stream in the same way.

Kammas bear results whenever they have the chance to do so. The manner they bear results is as follows.

"Sadisaṁ pākaṁ janeti"
Kamma will produce results similar to it.

"Yādisaṁ vappate bījaṁ tādisaṁ harate phalaṁ"
As you sow the seed so shall you reap the fruit.

"Kālyānakārī Kalyānaṁ pāpakārī ca pāpakaṁ"
Who used to do good receives good;
Who used to do bad receives bad.

All living beings are as they are conditioned by their

http://www.dhammadownload.com

respective kammas. Their fates and destinies are different, because they have done different kammas.

The way how kammas always arise and the manner how they always bear results are determined by the **'Law of Kamma'**. With the help of the Law of Kamma we can rationally explain the difference in fate and destiny of people as well as many life problems.

> *The **law of kamma** is not controlled by any Almighty God. It is a natural law which works in its own field. It does not give preference either to the rich or to the poor; it always works as it should. When a kamma is mature and it has the chance to bear results, nobody can stop it.*

The left-hand chief disciple of the Buddha, **Veneable Mahā Moggallāna,** had beaten to death his blind parents due to the repeated persuation of his wife in one of his past existences. He was foremost among the Buddha's disciples in supernormal power. Yet he could not stop his bad kamma from bearing results and he was beaten to death by 500 thiefs.

7 We can Shape our Fate and Destiny as we Like

The nuclear energy, the most powerful physical energy, can be converted into electrical energy to be used by many people for their welfare. On the other hand nuclear energy can be employed to destroy cities and countries in the form of atomic bombs and hydrogen bombs. Human beings have complete freedom to choose whether to use the nuclear energy for the welfare of the people or for

http://www.dhammadownload.com

their destruction.

Similarly every person has complete freedom to choose whether he will use the very powerful mental energy for his welfare or for his misery. Everyone has complete freedom to shape his fate and destiny as he likes. The law of Kamma will work justfully for him without giving preference to anyone.

As everyone's present situation is created by himself out of his free will, he should not blame anybody else. He should blame himself if he is in a bad situation and he should admire himself if he is in a good situation.

The great English poet and dramatist, **William Shakespeare,** 1564-1616, wrote: *"I am the captain of my soul and the master of my fate."*

We can now bear in mind that *"I am the captain of my mind and the creator of my fate."*

Create your own fate and destiny as you like. Many examples and many ways of creating one's fate and destiny are described in this book. The Law of Kamma is also explained exactly and fully in this book.

The right understanding of the Law of Kamma, Kamma and its result will make you a person with 'the **right view, Sammādiṭṭhi'.** If you do not understand the Law of Kamma, Kamma and its results and neglect them or disbelieve them, you will become a person with **'the wrong view, Micchādiṭṭhi'.**

The **right view** causes unarisen wholesome deeds to arise, multiplies the wholesome deeds that have already arisen and will condition a blissful existence to arise at death.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

The right view has no equal in causing meritorious deeds to arise, in multiplying meritorious deeds that have arisen and in conditioning blissful rebirths in blissful realms.

The **wrong view** causes unarisen immoral deeds to arise, multiplies the immoral deeds that have already arisen and will condition a woeful existence to arise at death. The wrong view has no equal in causing evil deeds to arise, in multiplying evil deeds that have arisen and in conditioning woeful rebirths in woeful abodes.

Thus it is very important for every Buddhist to understand kamma and its result and the law of kamma. Accordingly I have given many lectures on **"Kamma, the Real Creator,"** both in Myanmar and abroad.

The listeners are usually very much delighted to know this powerful mysterious force called 'kamma' acting on us and shaping our fate and destiny. So they persuade me to write a book on this topic. It has taken me a long time to write this book, both in English and in Myanmar, describing the full aspects of 'kamma' from various points of view for the welfare of all readers.

May you understand the Law of Kamma to attain the right view and make this right view your guiding torch to avoid the wrong path leading to woeful abodes and to follow the right path known as the **'Noble Eightfold Path'** which leads you straight to eternal peace and happiness called Nibbāna.

May you be free from all dangers and may you enjoy human happiness, celestial happiness andNibbānabliss for ever.

Dr. Mehm Tin Mon

http://www.dhammadownload.com

http://www.dhammadownload.com

1

What Existence Means

1 What is Existence?

The existence of a living being may be regarded as the sum of the activities and experiences of the being from birth to death.

Some people readily give a beautiful remark: "An existence is the state of being alive from the cradle to the grave."

According to Buddha Abhidhamma an existence begins from the arising of rebirth consciousness, its associated mental factors and kamma-born matter produced by one of the past kammas of the being who is now being conceived in the mother's womb.

The kamma-born matter forms a very tiny drop of clear liquid called *kalala fluid.* This *kalala fluid* is formed in the mother's ovum or sex cell which has been fertilized by the father's sperm. The parents' ovum and sperm act

http://www.dhammadownload.com

as essential supports for pregnancy to take place. The *kalala fluid* is like the seed; ovum and sperm are like the moist soil; the productive kamma is like the farmer.[1]

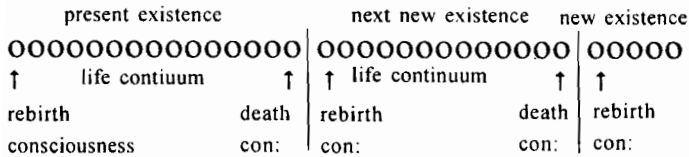
So pregnancy begins from the arising moment of rebirth consciousness, associated mental factors and kamma-born matter. The past kamma, that conditions the rebirth of the child to arise, keeps on producing its resultant consciousness and associated mental factors at every conscious moment till the kamma is exhausted at death.

One **conscious moment** is the life span of a consciousness. It is equal to three **short moments** - the short moment of the arising of the consciousness, the short moment of the existing of the consciousness, and the short moment of the dissolution of the consciousness. The consciousness arises one after another continuously without break, thus forming a long chain of mental stream.

The first kamma-resultant consciousness is called **"rebirth consciousness."** The series of subsequent resultant consciousnesses is called **"life continuum"** or *"bhavaṅga stream."* The last resultant consciousness in an existence is known as **"death consciousness."** After the death consciousness the being dies as the productive kamma is exhausted. But another productive kamma will have the chance to condition a new existence to arise in a similar way.

Kamma-born matter is produced continuously at every short moment starting from the arising moment of rebirth consciousness. Consciousness-born matter is produced continuously at every arising moment of bhavaṅga

http://www.dhammadownload.com



Mental stream flows on from one existence to another

consciousnesses starting from the arising moment of the first bhavaṅga consciousness till death. Starting from the time the nutriment consumed by the mother is received by the foetus. nutriment-produced matter is formed continuously at every short moment till death.

All matter is produced in the form of material groups consisting of 8, 9, 10, ... types of ultimate material entities. Each material group contains tejo – the heat element. This heat element reaches the existing state after one short moment and it then also produces heat-born matter continuously at every short moment. Each material group generally has a life-span of 17 conscious moments.

Thus, due to the formation of various kinds of matter, the foetus grows gradually and the baby is born on due date. After that the baby grows on due to the continuous formation of material groups until the person comes of age. All kamma-born matter perish at the time of death. All consciousness-born matter and all nutriment-born matter also perish soon after death. Only heat-born matter remians as a corpse.

Hence an existence is designated as a series of

http://www.dhammadownload.com

the arising and dissolution of mentality and materiality from the arising moment of the rebirth consciousness till the dissolution of the death consciousness.

When an unwholesome kamma has the chance to bear results as a reproductive kamma, a new existence is formed in a woeful abode.

When a sense-sphere wholesome kamma has the chance to bear results as a reproductive kamma, a new existence is formed either in the human realm or in a celestial realm. These two types of realms are known as sense-sphere blissful realms.

When a fine-material wholesome kamma, that is the kamma derived from a rūpa-jhāna consciousness, has the chance to condition a new rebirth, an existence of rūpa-brahmā is formed.

When an immaterial wholesome kamma, that is the kamma derived from an arūpa-jhāna consciousness, has the chance to condition a new rebirth, an existence of an arūpa-brahmā is formed.

2 Different Kinds of Existences

In **Mūlapaṇṇāsa Mahāvedalla Sutta** Venerable Mahā Koṭṭhika asked Venerable Sariputta, the right-hand chief disciple of the Buddha, "Venerable sir, what is existence?"

"Venerable sir, existence is of three kinds, namely, sense-sphere existence, fine-material-sphere existence and immaterial-sphere existence", answered Venerable Sariputta.

"Sense-sphere existence" means an existence in the sense sphere where sense pleasure is enloyed. The

http://www.dhammadownload.com

sense sphere includes four woeful realms, the human realm and six celestial realms. So animal existence, hungry-ghost existence, demon existence, hell existence, human existence and celestical existence are included in sense- sphere existence.

"Fine-material existence" means an existence in the fine-material sphere. The fine-material sphere consists of 16 fine-material realms named *Brahma-parisajjā realm, Brahma-purohitā realm, Mahā-brahmā realm,* etc. Among these realms, the brahmās in *Asaññā-satta realm* has only material body but no mentality and the brahmās in the remaining 15 realms have both body and mind. The brahmās do not enjoy sense pleasure; they are happy with jhāna bliss.

"Immaterial existence" means an existence in the immaterial sphere. The immaterial sphere consists of four immaterial realms named *Ākāsānañcāyatana realm, Viññāṇañcāyatana realm, Ākincaññāyatana realm* and *Nevasaññā-nāsaññāyatana realm.* The Arūpa brahmās who reside in these realms have only mentality but no body.

Existence differs not only on account of the difference in realms but also in appearance, in wealth, in health, in intelligence, in social status, in life-span, etc. Although there are more than 6500 million human beings in the world, none of them are identical. They all differ from one another in many respects.

Some are brought up in grand mansions in the lap of luxury, endowed with high intelligence and good health while some are brought up in wretched huts in absloute proverty, endowed with low intelligence, scanty knowledge

http://www.dhammadownload.com

and poor health.

Some are born millionaires while some are born paupers. Some are born extremely beautiful while some are born extremely ugly. Some have normal features but some are deformed, blind, deaf, etc. Some enjoy very sound health whereas some are bed-ridden with chronic illness. Some are outstanding in arts, music, singing, dancing, sports, science or technology whereas some are not competent in any work of life.

Who creates the different kinds of existences? Who manipulates the fate and destiny of all living beings to make none of them identical in appearance, intelligence, aptitude, wealth, health, etc.? Does an Almighty Being create all these differences? Is there another cause which brings about these differences?

3 Who Creates various Beings?

With respect to the existence of various beings in various planes of existence some people take the view that these beings come into existence without any cause and that they differ in many respects without any reason. This view is known as the **'View of Uncausedness'** *(ahetuka-diṭṭhi)*.

Every event and everything that come into existence have causes behind them. As one is ignorant of these causes one takes the view that they arise without any cause, then one will be wrong. If one believes that the rain falls without any reason just because one does not know the reason why it rains, then one will be wrong.

Many people believe that the world and all living be-

http://www.dhammadownload.com

ings are created by an Almighty Being. This belief comes from the teachings of certain religions.

An Almighty creator is known as *'Issara'* in Pāḷi and *'Is'vara'* in Sanskrit. Thus the view which believes that an Almighty Being creates all living beings and determines their fates and destinies is known as **'Issaranimmāna Vāda'**.

As there is complete freedom in worship one can believe in any religion one likes and accepts any belief one appreciates. However, one should study carefully the belief one accepts whether it is really correct, rational, beneficial and it can lead to a noble and happy life or not. Some points will be raised here for consideration.

There are several religions which teach that an Almighty Being create the world and all living beings. They give different names to this creator and they cannot agree that the creators they refer to are the same. So who is the real creator?

As that almighty creator is said to be omnipotent and he can do whatever he likes, why didn't he create only decent, righteous human beings, harmless useful animals and good pleasant things to fill the world? Why did he create wicked and stupid human beings, harmful and wild animals, poisonous snakes and scorpions, harmful bacteria and viruses, storms and earth quakes?

The great scientist **Albert Einstein** made the following remark:

> *"If this being (God) is omnipotent, then every occurrence, including every human action, every human thought, and every human*

http://www.dhammadownload.com

feeling and aspiration is also his work; how is it possible to think of holding men responsible for their deeds and thoughts before such an Almighty Being?

"In giving out punishments and rewards, he would to a certain extent be passing judgement on himself. How can this be combined with the goodness and righteousness ascribed to him? [1]

The English social reformer and champion of woman suffrage, **Charles Bradlaugh** (1832-1991), made the remark:

"The existence of evil is a terrible stumbling block to the Theist. Pain, misery, crime, poverty confront the advocate of eternal goodness, and challenge with unanswerable potency his declaraction of Deity as all-good, all-wise, and all-powerful". [2]

Venerable Narada Mahā Therea wrote in his well-known book: *"The Buddha and His Teachings"* as follows.

"Dogmatic writers of old authoritatively declared that God created man after his own image. Some modern thinkers state, on the contrary, that man created God after his own image. With the growth of civilization man's conception of God grows more and more refined. There is at present a tendency to substitute this personal God by an impersonal God.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

"Valtaire states that God is the noblest creation of man." [3]

4 The Discoveries of Science

In natural science such as physics, chemistry, geology and biology, scientists find that all natural phenomena occur under natural forces and natural causes. They did not find any evidence that they are created by an Almighty Being.

One basic law of science which is known as the **Law of Conservation of Matter and Energy** states: *"Matter and energy can neither be created nor destroyed."*

The great scientist **Albert Einstein** demonstrated in 1905 that matter and energy can be converted into one another by the equation $E=mc^2$, where 'E' is energy, 'm' is mass, and 'c' is the velocity of light. Thus matter and energy can be regarded to be the same. Matter can be regarded as the source of energy and a lot of energy will be emitted when matter is broken up. This principle is used in Atomic bombs and Hydrogen bombs.

According to the investigation of geologists the age of our earth is 4600 million years. Four thousand six hundred million years ago the earth was completely formed, but some parts of the earth were still in the molten stage. As the earth cooled down slowly, first life in the form of bacteria appeared on earth 4000 million years ago. The first single-celled animals and fungi appeared 2100 million years ago.

One thousand three hundred million years ago first complex multicellular organism appeareed in the form of seaweed. Three hundred million years later first sexual

http://www.dhammadownload.com

reproduction took place. Six hundred and twenty million years ago first common worms with tube-like body and primitive nervous system appeared. One hundred and ten million years later first vertebrates appeared.

First life on land and first jawed fish appeared 425 million years ago. Thirty million years later first insects in the form of millipedes, mites, spiders, scorpions and spring-tails came into existence. First winged insects appeared 330 million years ago. The first dinosaurs, the big land animals, made their way 235 million years ago.

First placental mammals also came in 114 million years ago. Many new mammals and birds appeared and primitive mammals died out 40 millions ago. Nineteen million years later apes split off from monkeys.

Homo erectus, the erect-walking humans, emerged and hunting began 1.9 million years ago. It took three hundred thousand years for humans to learn the art of making fire. The modern humans known as **Homo sapiens** emerged 600,000 years ago. The more modern humans known as **homo sapiens sapiens** emerged 400,000 years ago. [4]

The above discoveries of geologists differ markedly from the statement that an Almighty God created the earth, human beings and all kinds of animals in seven days 6000 years ago. Thus the great English world historian, **H.G. Wells** (1866-1946) wrote:

> *"When we study our Holy Book we are told that God created this world six thousand years ago. When we study geology, we can understand that it has taken billions of years for*

http://www.dhammadownload.com

this earth to cool down and settle before life became possible. Therefore, how can we believe what is written in our Holy Book?" [5]

The **'Theory of Evolution'**, formulated by **Charles Darwin**, 1809-1882, the English naturalist, also opposed the 'Theory of Creation.' Darwin deduced a struggle for survival from the individual variation within a species and survival of those with most favourable variations, some being transmitted to offspring. This principle of natural selection is, with modifications, almost universally accepted by scientists.[6]

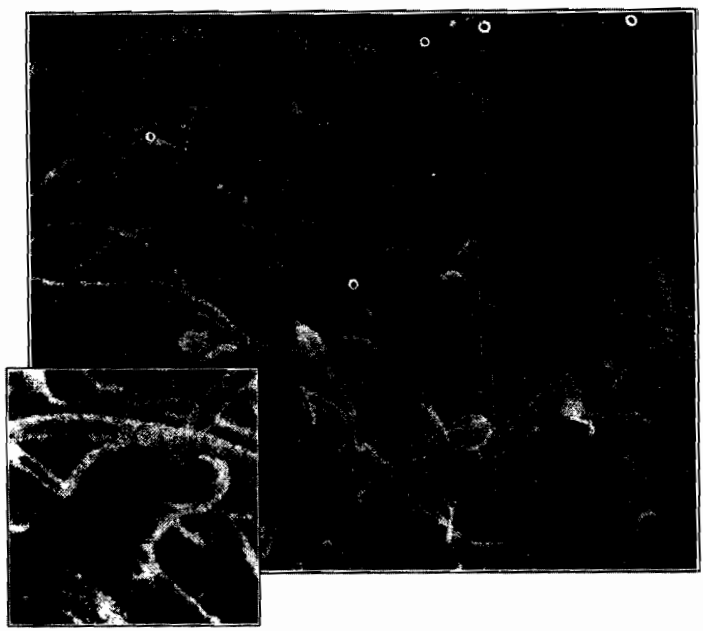
The research conducted by **Louis Pasteur,** 1822-1895, the French scientist who established the process of **Pasteurization,** revealed that living beings can only be produced from living beings. So scientists accepted the principle: *"All life from life" (Omne Viuvum ex vivo).*[7] So to believe that the first human being was created from a handful of earth is quite difficult.

Test-tube Babies

In the investigation about pregnancy in the mother's womb scientists took an ovum from the ovary of the wife of a barren couple and put it in a test tube. They added the semen of the husband to the test tube and watched from a microscope.

Many sperms swarmed around the ovum, trying to penetrate into it. After a sperm had penetrated into the ovum, the skin of the ovum hardened, preventing other sperms from penetrating into it. [8]

http://www.dhammadownload.com



The fertilized ovum known as zygote was placed inside the womb of the mother. The zygote attached itself to the wall of the womb when pregnancy took place. The baby was born in due time just as in normal pregnacy. The baby born in this way is known a **'test tube baby.'**

Nowadays scientists help barren couples from all over the world to get test-tube babies. These couples should not get children according to the wish of the Almighty God, but scientists can help them to get children. So scietists might be regarded as real creators!

They can also help a woman to bear more than one child at a time. If a prospective mother doesn't want to bear her child in order to avoid pain and to preserve her

http://www.dhammadownload.com

beauty, she can hire another woman to bear her child. Scientists just put the fertilized ovum of the couple in the womb of the hired woman. The fertilized ovum will attach itself to the wall of the womb and the hired woman will get pregnant. She will give birth to the child in due time.

Sometimes the hired woman loves the child as her own baby as she has to bear the child, give birth to it and feed it with her own breast-milk. So she refuses to give the child to the couple who hires her. The couple has to put up the case to a court. The judge let the blood of the child, the couple and the hired woman be tested and gives the child to its right parents.

Again, as the hired women get good payments for bearing a child, they become greedy and they bear the children of two or three couples at a time. I read in the newspaper an amazing news that an Italian lady bore the children of six couples simultaneously! As her womb did not have enough room for six babies, the babies were delivered by caesarean section about two months before the due date and brought up in incubators. When the babies became healthy, they were given to their respective parents after making blood tests.

Human Cloning

A more wonderful research being carried out by scientists at present is **"Cloning"** - a new process of producing offsprings asexually from the cells of an ancester. Cloning is a process to make an exact copy of a plant or an animal by taking a cell from it and developing it artificially. In England scientists successfully produced 18 lambs from

http://www.dhammadownload.com

a sheep named **Dolly.** All the lambs are indentical with their mother in appearance.

After attaining success in the research with animals, scientists would like to carry on the research with human beings. Many governments do not encourage this research for fear of unwanted consequences. In November, 2004, I was asked by the President of the Buddhist Missionary Society of Malaysia to give a lecture on *"Abhidhamma View on Human Cloning"* in the Buddhist Mahā Vihāra, Kua Lumpur, and I complied with his request.

According to the scientific point of view the research which is successful with plants and animals will also be successful with men for men and animals share similar physiological systems.

According to the Abhidhamma point of view too the human cloning will be successful as it was successful with the sheep Dolly. The reason is that kamma can produce rebirth in the following four ways.

(1) Spontaneous rebirth *(Opapātika-paṭisandhi)*

This is spontaneous rebirth as a mature being who has come of age. Brahmās, devās (celestial beings), denizens of hell, some hungry ghosts *(petas)* and demons *(asurakāyas)* are reborn as mature grown up beings without passing through foetal and infant stages and without parents. As soon as the reproductive kammas produce their resultant consciousnesses, associated mental factors and kamma-born matter, they appear right at their dwellings, i.e., celestial mansions, forests, mountains or seashores.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

The first human beings in the world were born in this way. The beautiful courtesan **Ambapālī** of Vesālī was also born in this way during the time of the Buddha. The fish in hot-water ponds storing water from hot springs must be born in this way. Some people who became deities or ghosts soon after death are also born by spontaneous rebirth.

The bodies of brahmās and devās are composed of fine material which is mainly kamma-born matter. So they cannot be seen and they leave no corpse when they die. Scientists are not aware of the spontaneous rebirth yet.

(2) Moisture-born rebirth *(Saṁsedaja-paṭisandhi)*

Mosquitoes lay their eggs in stagnant water and moist places. The eggs hatch into larvae which later become mosquitoes. Frogs also lay their eggs in stagnant water. The eggs hatch into tadpoles which later become frogs. Flies lay their eggs on decaying food, rotten carcasses and decaying organic matter. The eggs hatch into maggots which later become flies. Most insects are born by this type of rebirth.

Queen Padumavati was conceived in a lotus blossom, and **Queen Veluvati** in the hollow of a bamboo plant. **Cloning** of animals and human beings will belong to this category of moisture-born rebirth.

(3) Egg-born rebirth *(Aṇḍaja-paṭisandhi)*

Birds and chickens are conceived in the eggs in their mother's wombs. They are beings which are born from eggs with shells.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

(4) Born from a womb *(Jalābuja-paṭisandhi)*

Human beings and mammals are born from the wombs of their mothers. They are born on due dates. Some earth-bound deities and some woeful ghosts are also born from the wombs of their mothers.

Both *aṇḍaja* and *jalābuja* rebirths are collectively termed *gabba seyyaka rebirth.* [*gabba* = in mother's womb + *seyyaka* =one who lies][9]

Kamma is very powerful. It bears its results in the form of resultant consciousness, associated mental factors and fine kamma-born matter which can take the form of a full-grown being in spontaneous rebirth. Spontaneous re-birth needs no matrix or place for the foetus to cling to.

So human cloning, in which the parent's cell serves as a matrix for the foetus to cling to, will be successful as in producing test-tube babies in which the fertilized parents' sex cell serves as the matrix. But should human cloning be done?

No, it should not be done. The success in human cloning will be looked upon as a wonderful achievement in science for a few days. Then it will be regarded as an ordinary achievement. If human beings are mass-produced from a human-cloning factory, human beings will become a cheap commodity. The human value, the human dignity and the teachings of the theists will be greatly damaged.

We cannot expect the children produced by cloning to be as intelligent as their intelligent mother or father. They will be identical to their mother or father in appearance but not in intellingence. Every living being is conditioned by its

http://www.dhammadownload.com

own kamma; it has its kamma as the cause, the parent and the refuge.

Children need their parents' love. Without parents' love they will become abnormal. And the world is already overpopulated and some countries have to practise birth-control. If a country needs more human beings, let its married couples produce their beloved children freely and bring them up as normal, happy children. Human happiness and family happiness lie mainly on the family unit.

References

1 *Nārada Mahā Thera, 'The Buddha and His Teachings', published by Singapore Buddhist Meditation Centre, p. 224.*

2 *Ibid, p. 224.*

3 *Ibid, p. 224.*

4 *Larousse, 'Desk Reference Encyclopedia', Great Britain, pp. 58, 60, 62.*

5 *Dr. K. Sri Dhammananda, "Why we should Practise Buddhism", Buddhist Missionary Society Malaysia, p. 15.*

6 *The Columbia Viking Desk Encyclopedia, New York, p. 321.*

7 *Ibid., p. 957.*

8 *Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, "Scientific Evidences for Past Existences and Future Existences", p. 23.*

9 *Ashin Janakābhivaṁsa, "Abhidhamma in Daily Life," SBVMS Publication, p. 243-245.*

http://www.dhammadownload.com

2

The Deep and Subtle Life Puzzle

1 Can Life come from Matter ?

As animal cloning has been successful, that human cloning will also meet with success has been discussed with reasons from the Abhidhamma point of view in the last chapter. But scientists will find it hard to explain why it will be successful. As they have accepted the principle *"All life from life"*, how will they explain that a living being is born from a cell which is actually lifeless matter?

Also in producing a test-tube baby from a mother's ovum fertized by the father's sex cell called sperm the two cells are lifeless matter. Again scientists will find it hard to explain how a living baby is born from two material cells.

2 The Gene Theory

In the lifeless plant world pollination between stamen and stigma gives rise to a seed which produces a plant similar to the mother plant and the new plant will in due course bear the same kind of fruits as the mother plant

http://www.dhammadownload.com

does. But in the human world sons and daughters resamble their parents in certain aspects of appearance only and some children are totally different from their parents. The parents have brown complexion, black hair and black eyes whereas the sons and daughters have white complexion, golden hair and blue eyes like English Children. How can these be explained with the *gene theory?*

According to the gene theory a cell can produce only an identical kind of cell. At the time of conception the embryo begins with a single cell, i.e., the fertilized ovum. When the cell grows into a baby, many varieties of new cells are formed. How can this be explained?

Similarly, if the first created human being 'Adam' had white complexion, golden hair and blue eyes, how can we account for the coming into existence of the Chinese and the Japanese with yellow complexion, black hair and black eyes, the Myanmars, the Thais, the Malays and the Indonesians with brown complexion, black hair and black eyes, and the Negroes with black complexion, curly black hair and black eyes?

In the case of identical twins it is explained that the fertilized ovum or zygote breaks into two cells and the two cells develop separately to form two babies. But these identical babies differ from each other in mental abilities such as aptitude, temperament, interest, intelligence, talent, fate and destiny. Scientists cannot offer a satisfactory explanation for these differences.

> *The most serious problem is to give a satisfactory reason for the arising of the 'mind' and 'life' out of matter, that is the two physi-*

http://www.dhammadownload.com

cal cells known as 'ovum' cell and 'sperm' cell. Scientists remain silent on this problem.

Let alone the problem of the formation of the mind out of matter, scientists do not know what the mind really is. The mind is a mental entity consisting of consciousness and mental factors. Scientists are of course ignorant of the true nature of consciousness and mental factors and how the latter influence the mind to be wholesome and intelligent or to be wicked and most destructive in the world.

When they do not know the characteristics and the functions of mental entities, they tend to assume the brain to function as the mind. This will make the matter worse for the brain is just matter and it does not know what is good or bad, what is right or wrong, what should be the noble aim in life.

The brain theory will block the human progress and the development of the mind to the noblest state to enjoy eternal peace and happiness. So it is very important to understand clearly how the mind controls each individual's fate and destiny through kamma property.

3 The Past Existences and the Future Existences

It is indeed wonderful that scientists could make a systematic study on the basis of the formation of fossils, the radioactivity of carbon, etc., and offer a sound prediction on the age of our earth and the evolution of life in various stages throughout history. However, they could not study about the past existences of each living being, neither do they have means to study the future existences of an individual.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

Also the theists, who preach that an Almighty God creates everythig, knows everything and controls everything, do not say anything about the uncountable past existences of an individual as they cannot know such existences. Again in theism there is no immediate future existence after death as each individual has to wait in the grave for the Judgement Day.

Since scientists believe that a human being comes into existence from the combination of the parents' ovum cell and sperm cell, there cannot be any past existence in such belief. Again there cannot be a future existence after death. As each human being can live just for one existence and his good or bad actions will not bear any results after the present existence, he will not care to perform any meritorious deed such as giving alms, observing moral precepts and practising meditation. He will just try to enjoy sensual pleasure as much as possible. This kind of living will not lead to true happiness at the present, and it will lead to woeful rebirth after death. So it will be a great loss to him.

In Buddhism and Hinduism there is **Saṁāsra** - the round of existences. The number of the past existences of each living being is uncountable and that each being will live on life after life in the future until the time when he will be liberated from the misery of the round of rebirths (Saṁsāra).

There are concrete evidences to show that each individual has lived in the past previous to this existence and that he will be reborn in the next existence soon after his death. These evidences cannot be denied and they should not be neglected. A rational explanation for the continuous

http://www.dhammadownload.com

existences of each individual should be sought and the best preparation should be made so that we can live happily with prosperity in every future existence.

Dr. Tha Hla who remembers his past existence well.(p.48)

U Aye Naing
who also remembers
his past existence well.
(p. 48)

http://www.dhammadownload.com

3

Evidences for Past Existences

I have collected many concrete, scientific evidences to prove definitely that there are past existences and future existences of each individual in my book: *"Scientific Evidences for Past Existences and Future Existences."* As many people are interested in this book, the book has been printed seven times in Myanmar language. Interested persons can read in detail about past and future existences of some notable individuals in that book. Here I shall describe these evidences briefly but concisely to make the matter clear.

The following evidences support the real existence of past lives.

1 There are persons who remember their past lives all over the world.

2 Infant prodigies exist all over the world.

3 Past existences can be remembered by age-degression through hypnosis.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

4 Past existences can be known through supernormal power.

5 Past existences can be known in insight meditation.

1 Persons who Remember their Past Existences

There are persons all over the world who can remember their past existences correctly. In Buddhism these persons are said to attain the wisdom known as *'jātissarañāṇa"*. Persons who want to attain this wisdom can make a wish whenever they perform meritorious deeds. Two well-known persons who possess this wisdom and who are still living now in Yangon are Dr. Tha Hla and U Aye Naing.

(1) **Dr. Tha Hla** is a specialist in skin diseases and a retired professor of the Institute of Medicine (1). He was a spinster by the name of Daw Shwe Mai in his past life. Daw Shwe Mai donated her farm land, her house and her possession to a Buddhist monastery and made a wish to become an intelligent man in her next life. Her wish was fulfilled. Even the burning scar in Daw Shwe Mai's chest was transmited to Dr. Tha Hla's chest. [1]

(2) **U Aye Naing** is a retired Assistant director and Adviser to the Ministry of Religious Affairs. He could remember his past existence as a Karen National Chief, U Nay Gyaw, and his past family in detail. He even remembered an earthen pot with some silver coins and gold ornaments which U Nay Gyaw buried under the mango tree. At the age of three, U Aye Naing went to his old house and told his former son and daughters to unearth that pot. They got it and believed that the boy was really their father. He

http://www.dhammadownload.com

visted his past family every year. [2]

(3) **Dr. Ian Stevenson,** a Professor from Virginia University, U.S.A., made a world-wide research on persons who could tell about their past existences. After studying about a thousand cases and publishing several books on his findings, he concluded that the children whom he had investigated could correctly tell about their past existences. [3]

(4) In Central Myanmar in a village called In Bin Hla in Tat Kone Township there was born a baby girl with two fleshy bumps like horns on her head. She was named **Ma Htay.** When she could speak well, she talked about her two past existences.

In her first past existence she was Daw Mya in Ngaung Bin Gyi village. Daw Mya hired Ma Thein Tin and her mother to work in her farm. Ma Thein Tin was thirteen years old, but she was stout and tall. So her mother let her work as an adult. However, when Daw Mya gave them their wages, she gave Ma Thien Tin only half the wage of an adult, saying Ma Thein Tin was just a child. Ma Thein Tin's mother pleaded with her saying, "We are poor. I let my daughter work as an adult to get adult's wage. So please pay her adult's wage."

Daw Mya refused to pay. That amounted to cheating half the wage of Ma thein Tin. So when Daw Mya died, she was conceived in the womb of Ma Thein Tin's water buffalo. She grew up as a female water buffalo, bore three sons and died. On the night before she died Ma Thein Tin had a dream. The female buffalo came to her and gave its

http://www.dhammadownload.com

flesh to her. Ma Thein Tin got pregnant and in due course gave birth to Ma Htay with two fleshy bumps like horns on her head to signify the fact that her past existence was a buffalo. Ma Htay remembered her three buffalo sons in her past life and grieved tearfully for them. Dr. Ian Stevenson came to Myanmar to investigate this case. [4]

(5) **Shanti Devi** was born in New Delhi, India, in 1926. When she was three years old, she told her parents that she had a husband by the name of Kadanath Chaubi, a textile trader, in Mutra. She said that she was his wife Luddi in her past existence and that Luddi died ten days after giving birth to a son.

As she talked often about her past existence, her father wrote a letter, addressed to "Kadanath Chaubi, Textile Trader, Mutra". About a week later a letter came from Kadanath Chaubi, saying that his wife was indeed Luddi and she did pass away ten days after giving birth to a son. He also asked for permission to let him see Shanti Devi.

A few days later while Shanti was playing in front of the house, she immediately ran into the bed room. When asked by her mother she said that her former husband was at the gate. It was indeed Kadanath Chaubi! As all what Shanti had said came to be frue, her father informed the Research Department that his daughter could remember her past life well. They arranged a trip to take Shanti Devi to Mutra.

At the Mutra station Shanti greeted her former relatives by name. She was put in a pony cart and asked tc give directions to her former house. Shanti gave correct directions. She also remembered the house although it was

http://www.dhammadownload.com

painted differently.

Before they entered the house the Research people asked Shanti about the rooms and the furnitures in each room. Again what she said was found to be correct. While they were sitting in the parlour, Shanti said that she (Luddi) buried one hundred silver coins in one corner of the room. The Research people delightfully dug the ground, but no money was found. Then Kadanath Chaubi apologized them for he had already taken the money earlier. [5]

The readers can make personal research as the children who remember their past lives are likely to be found in every town and village.

2 Infant Prodigies Exist all over the World

(1) The wonder child from England by the name of **Christian Heineken** could speak within a few hours of his birth. He could repeat passages from the Bible at the age of one year. He could answer any question on geography at the age of two. He could speak French and Latin at the age of three. He became a student of philosophy at the age of four. Clearly he could recall the knowledge that he had learnt in his past existence. [6]

(2) **William James Sidis,** the wonder child of the United States, could read and write at the age of two. He could speak French, Russian, English, German with some Latin and Greek at the age of eight.

(3) **Macaulay** in England could write a world history at the age of six. He must have studied world history in his past existence. [6]

(4) **Jen Jen** in the Republic of China understood Chi-

http://www.dhammadownload.com

nese and English when he was 18 months old; he could speak these two languages at the age of two. He could read English and Chinese at the age of three. He learned high school mathematics at the age of four. So he was admitted to Vuhan University at the age of four as the youngest student in 1985.[7]

(5) **Ma Hla Gyi** in Myanmar in 1954 could read Pāḷi and understand the meaning at the age of six. She remembered her past life as a learned Elder monk.

(6) Also a boy in Myanmar was called **Piṭaka Maung Tun Kyaing** because he could recite much Piṭaka Pāli at the age of six. He was invited to many towns and villages to recite Piṭaka Pāli as a ceremony of Dhamma recitation. He was also a learned monk in his past existence. As he remembered the Piṭaka Pāḷi in the present existence, he could recite the Pāḷi without learning it.

So there arise in the world highly developed personalities and Perfect Ones like the Buddhas. Could they be the products of a single existence? Could they be exceptional with extraordinary brains? Scientists studied the Brain of Albert Einstein after his death. They could not find any extraordinary features. The prodigies could evidently show special abilities due to their past learnings in their past existences.

3 Remembering Past Existences by Age Degression through Hypnosis

Those who could not remember their past existences can be hypnotized and asked to tell about their past existences. Under hypnosis a person can be asked by the

http://www.dhammadownload.com

hypnotist to answer questions about his past experiences, about events in his childhood days and about his past existences. This technique has been much studied and practised in Europe and the United States of America.

(1) **Mrs. N. Baker,** a housewife in England, did not speak French. She had never studied French, and she had never gone to France. Yet when she was hypnotized, she spoke about many events that had occurred in Paris in French fluently. [8]

(2) **Reverend Martin,** the clergyman in Coptic Church, Pensylvania, and 22 educated church members wanted to do their own research with regard to past existences. They learned the art of hypnosis and they hypnotized their church devotees who never believed in past existences. But when they were asked under hypnosis to tell about their past existences, they readily told who they were in the past, where they lived, where they worked, and what happened in their past lives. All the talks were recorded and played back to them. "Am I telling my past existence? I can't believe it," they remarked in great surprise. When their statements under hypnosis about their past existences were investigated, they were found to be true. Their research findings were published as a book entitled *"Researches in Reincarnation and Beyond"*. [9]

(3) A research committee in the United States of America hypnotized **Mrs. Virginia Tighe** six times in 1952-1953. In all the six times she spoke about her past life as **Bridy Murphy** in Belfast, Ireland, about 150 years ago. She told the place where she lived, the name of the street,

http://www.dhammadownload.com

the name of the big store where she used to do shopping, and the name of her husband who served as a Professor of Law in Queen's College around the year 1847.

The research committee went to Belfast to make an investigation. They could not find the name of the street, the address where Bridy Murphy lived, the big store where she used to do shopping. Everything had changed in the course of 150 years. But when they studied the old city diaries and the records, they found the name of the street, and the name of the big store mentioned by Mrs. Virginia Tighe. They also saw the record that the Queen of England came to Ireland in 1847 and opened Queen's College where Bridy Murphy's husband worked as a law professor. The story of Bridy Murphy was published in newspapers and journals and it became well-known in the United States of America.

The Miracle Man, Edgar Cayce

The ability and the achievements of Edgar Cayce in the United States of America were very mysterious and very marvellous. He was born in Kentucky in 1877. His farming parents were not educated. He went to a country school up to the ninth grade. Then he worked as a clerk in a bookshop. Later he became an insurance salesman. At 21, he became afflicted with laryngitis and lost his voice. All medication proved ineffective for a year.

Then while he was working as a photographer's apprentice, a travelling entertainer and hypnotist, Mr. Hart, came to town. He agreed to hypnotize Edgar Cayce.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

Miraculously Cayce could talk in a normal voice under hypnosis. Later a local man, Mr. Layne, who had some talent as a hypnotist, hypnotized Cayce and suggested to him to describe the nature of his ailment.

Edgar Cayce responded in a normal voice, "In the normal state, the body is unable to speak, because of a partial paralysis of the inferior muscles of the vocal cords produced by nerve strain. This is a psychological condition producing a physical effect. It may be removed by increasing the circulation to the affected parts by suggestion while in the unconscious condition."

Mr. Layne promply suggested to Cayce that his circulation would increase to the affected parts and the condition would be alleviated. Gradually Cayce's upper chest and then his throat began to turn pink - then rose - then violet red. After 20 minutes the sleeping man cleared his throat and said, "It's all right now. The condition is removed. Make the suggestion that the circulation return to normal and let the body awaken."

Mr. Layne gave the suggestion as directed; Edgar Cayce woke up and began to speak normally. It occurred to Layne that if, in the hypnotic state, Cayce could see and diagnose the condition of his own body, he might also be able to see and diagnose that of others, They tried the experiment on Layne himself, who had been suffering from a stomach ailment. Cayce, under hypnosis, described the inner condition of Layne's body and suggested certain modes of treatment. It worked. Then Cayce diagnosed many patients and give correct readings.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

Readings could be taken at night or in broad daylight. A few minutes after lying down he would put himself to sleep. Then Layne or Cayce's wife, or any other responsible person would give him appropriate suggestion. The usual formula was like this:

"You will now have before you (individual's name) who is located at (street, address, town, state). You will go over his body carefully, examine it thoroughly, and tell me the conditions you find at the present time, giving the cause of existing conditions; also suggestions for help and relief of his body. You will answer questions as I ask them."

Edgar Cayce, under hypnosis, had parasychological ability. He could examine patients who were far away and he could see penetratively into their bodies to diagnose the nature of diseases and ailments correctly. So invalid patients need not be brought to him. He could make correct diagnosis and cure the patients not only from the United States but also from other countries.

Edgar Cayce had been giving medical diagnosis by clairvoyance since 1901 and about thirty thousand patients were cured of their chronic diseases. He could also see their past kammas and he said that **some diseases were connected with their past bad kammas.** To cure past kamma-related diseases, the bad effects of the immoral kammas had to be stopped by performing moral deeds and the present diseases had to be cured by proper medicines. The medicines which Cayce prescribed were mainly herbal medicines. An **Edgar Cayce Foundation** was set up in Virginia Beach. The records of patients were kept in the Foundation.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

Life Readings which are more Exact than Astrological Charts

It was not until 1923, in Dayton, Ohio, that the **first reference to reincarnation** appeared during one of Edgar Cayce's readings. After being asked by a man to give him an **astrological chart,** Cayce mentioned casually from his unconscious state that **more important than the urges from the planetary influences were the drives, talents and abilities which came to the man from previous lives on earth.**

Then followed **"Life Readings"** in which Cayce described some details of previous incarnations on earth, apparently picking out only those that were most influential in the present. He then frequently gave names, dates, and places, as well as characteristic urges of talents, weakness, and abilities, and sometimes physical and psychological problems arising as a result, he explained, of memory carried over at a deep unconscious level from these previous lives. [2]

Life Reading on Edgar Cayce himself revealed that he had been a **high priest** in Egypt, many centuries ago, who possessed great occult powers; but self-will and sensuality proved his undoing. In a later incarnation in Persia he had been a **physician.** Once he was wounded in desert warfare and left to die on the sands. Alone, without food, water and shelter, he spent three days and nights in such physical agony that he made a supreme effort to **release his consciousness from his body.**

He was successful in this attempt. This was in part

http://www.dhammadownload.com

the basis for his faculty in the present for releasing his mind from the limitations of his body. [2]

> *If one has planted the seed of wisdom (vijjā) and the seed of moral conduct (caraṇa), they will grow up into big plants in later existences.*

A Maiden Telegraph Operator

A young woman telegraph operator in New York city became curious about the strange telegrams that she was asked on several occasions to send to Virginia Beach. She made inquiries about Edgar Cayce's indentity; her curiosity heightened, and she decided to have a life reading.

She was told in the reading that she was wasting her time as a telegraph operator, and that she should study commercial art, as she had been a **competent artist** for several past life times and could be one again.

The notion of entering commercial art or any other kind of art had never entered her head; but on the strength of a daring sense that she might as well try anything once, she put herself through art school. To her surprise she found that she had genuine talent; she soon became a highly successful commercial artist, and incidentally transformed her personality in the process.[10]

4 Knowing Past Existences through Supernormal Power

The special knowledge that one can recollect one's past existence by tracing backwards the stream of the arising and perishing of the five aggregates of various past

http://www.dhammadownload.com

existences is known as the **Supernormal Knowledge of Recollecting Past Existences** *(Pubbenivāsānussati Abhiññāṇa).*

There are six kinds of people who can attain this knowledge. They are (1) sectarians, (2) ordinary disciples, (3) Great Disciples, (4) Chief Disciples, (5) Pacceka Buddhas, and (6) Buddhas.

(1) Sectarians or ascetics outside the Buddha's Dispensation can recollect their respective past existences as far back as forty world cycles, because their wisdom is weak as they cannot define mentality and materiality.

(2) The Buddha's ordinary disciples can recollect their respective past existences as far back as one thousand world cycles, because their wisdom is great.

(3) The Great Disciples of the Buddha can recollect their respective past existences as far back as one hundred thousand world cycles.

(4) The Chief Disciples of the Buddha can recollect their respective past existences as far back as one asaṅkheyya (incalculable aeon) and one hundred thousand world cycles.

(5) Pacceka Buddhas can recollect their respective past existences as far back as two asaṅkheyya and one hundred thousand world cycles.

(6) The Fully Enlightenned Buddhas can recollect unlimited number of existences of themselves as well as of others.

At the present time also those who want to develop the supernormal knowledge of Recollecting Past Existences

http://www.dhammadownload.com

can do so by developing eight jhāna attainments in ten kasiṇas and then practising in 14 ways according to the instructions of the Buddha.

The description of the Supernormal Knowledge of Recollecting Past Existences in the Buddhist Canon is as follows, "He directs, he inclines, his mind to the knowledge of recollecting past life. He recollects his manifold past life, that is to say, one birth, two births, three births, ten births, twenty births, thirty births, a hundred births, a thousand births, a hundred thousand births; there I was so named, of such a race, with such an appearance, such was my food, such my experience of pleasure and pain, such the end of my life span; and passing away from there, I reappeared elsewhere; and there too I was so named, of such a race, with such an appearance, such was my food, such my experience of pleasure and pain, such an end of my life span; and passing away from there, I reappeared here; thus with its aspects and particulars he recollects his manifold past life". (D. i, 81)

The Revelation of the Buddha

Immediately after enlightenment the Buddha uttered this paean of joy:

> *"Through many a birth I wandered in saṁsāra, seeking but not finding, the builder of the house. Sorrowful is it to be born again and again.*
>
> *"O house-builder! Thou art seen. Thou shalt build no house again. All thy rafters are broken. Thy ridge-pole is shattered. My*

http://www.dhammadownload.com

mind has attained the unconditioned.
Achieved is the end of craving."
(Dhammapada 153, 154)

In this paean, 'house' refers to 'body and mind'; house-builder refers to 'craving *(taṇhā)*'; 'rafters' means 'defilements'; and 'ridge-pole' means 'ignorance *(avijjā)*.'

The Buddha points out that it is craving which causes new existence to arise life after life, and when that craving is totally destroyed by the fourfold Path-wisdom, there will be no new existence and consequently no new misery.

Because some beings have done immoral actions, they were reborn in the four woeful abodes after death. Because some beings have performed various meritorious deeds, they gain new existences in blissful realms after death. The Buddha explains this matter clearly in many discourses.

At one time the Buddha, accompanied by monks, made a journey from Sāvatthi city to Sāketa city and spent the night in a forest called 'Aṅjana forest'. On the next day the Buddha and the monks went into Sāketa city on alms round.

At the city gate the Buddha met a rich brahmin of Sāketa. On seeing the Buddha the Brahmin joyfully approached the Buddha as if seeing his long-lost son, saying," O my son, I have not seen you for a very long time." The Buddha told the monks to let the Brahmin do as he liked.

The Brahmin embraced the Buddha, saying, "My son, I have not seen you for a long time. We have been sepa-

http://www.dhammadownload.com

rated for so long." He requested the Buddha to let him offer food to the Buddha and the Saṁgha. The Buddha accepted the offer by remaining silent. The Brahmin took the Buddha's alms-bowl and led the way. He also sent words to his wife: "My son is coming; prepare the seats for the Buddha and the Saṁgha!"

The wife prepared the seats and waited for the Buddha. On seeing the Buddha from far away, the love of a mother for her son arose in her. She also embraced the Buddha's legs and wept, saying, 'My son, I have not seen you for a long time."

The Buddha delivered a suitable discourse to the Brahmin and his wife. Both of them were enlightened as Stream Enterers. They begged the Buddha to allow them to offer food to the Buddha and the Saṁgha as long as the Buddha stayed in Sāketa. The Buddha declined the request as he wanted other citizens to have the chance of offering food to him also. But he accepted the Brahmin's next request to have meals at his house after going on alms-round and to deliver a discourse everyday.

From that day onwards the citizens of Sāketa called the Brahmin 'the Buddha's father' and his wife 'the Buddha's mother.'

Venerable Ānandā asked the Buddha why the people called the Brahmin and his wife so and why did the Brahmin and his wife said that they were the Buddha's father and mother.

"Ānandā, this Brahmin and his wife were my parents for five hundred existences successively, my parents' elder brother and elder sister for five hundred existences,

http://www.dhammadownload.com

and my parents' younger brother and younger sister for five hundred existences. So the Brahmin and his wife said that they were my parents with the special love they had developed for me in the past," said the Buddha.

As the Brahmin and his wife had the chance to revere the Buddha and the Saṁgha closely and listen to appropriate Dhamma daily, they attained the three higher Fruition Wisdoms and became Arahants. When they passed away, the Buddha came to their funeral ceremony and delivered a sermon on *Jarā Sutta.* At the end of the discourse eighty four thousand people were enlightened as noble persons *(Ariyās).*

As all beings have gone through uncountable existences in the very long Saṁsāra, there is no one who has not been one's father, one's mother, one's son, one's daughter, and so on. Thus said the Buddha in *'Anamatagga Sutta.'*

5 Knowing Past Existences in Insight Meditation

By undertaking tranquillity meditation one first develops the right mental concentration which prevents mental defilements *(kilesās),* the cause of all suffering, from arising in the mind. When the mind is pure, it radiates very bright and penetrative light which enables the meditator to penetrate into his body and mind and to define the ultimate material entities and the ultimate mental entities which constitute body and mind.

The knowledge which can define the ultimate material entities such as the element of extension *(pathavī.)* the element of cohesion *(āpo),* the element of heat *(tejo),*

http://www.dhammadownload.com

the element of motion *(vāyo)* and the ultimate mental entities such as consciousness *(citta)* and various mental factors *(cetasikas)* is known as the **Knowledge of Defining Mentality-Materiality** *(Nāmarūpa-paricchedа-ñāṇa)*.

On attaining this knowledge the meditator realizes that what really exist in a person are just five aggregates made up of material entities and mental entities which are arising and perishing rapidly and incessantly and there is no permanent entity to be called 'self, person, I, jīva, atta or soul'. So he can **discard the wrong view of 'personality belief'** *(sakkāya diṭṭhi)*.

Next he discerns the causes that give rise to materiality and mentality. He discerns by direct knowledge the four causes – kamma, consciousness, heat *(utu)* and nutriment *(āhāra)* – that give rise to materiality. He also discerns the contact between the six sense doors and the corresponding sense objects that gives rise to the congnitive series of consciousness and mental factors.

Then the causes and the effects of Dependent Arising *(Paṭiccasamuppāda)* are discerned and verified to clarify all doubts pertaining to the past, to the present and to the future, such as "Was I in the past? Was I not in the past? What was I in the Past? Having been what, what was I in the past? Shall I be in the future? What shall I be in the future? Having been what, what shall I be in the future? From what existence comes this existence? What existence will follow the present existence?"

The **'Knowledge of Discerning the Causes of Mentality-Materiality'** is known as *'Paccaya-pariggaha-ñāṇa'*.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

When the meditator has discerned the causes of mentality-materiality by means of the causal relations of Dependent Arising and has abandoned uncertainty about the three periods of time, then all past, future and present states are understood by him in accordance with death and rebirth-linking. This marks the state of purification of the mind by overcoming doubt *(kaṅkhā- vitaraṇa-visuddhi).*

Thus by undertaking tranquillity meditation to develop the concentration and purity of the mind and then insight meditation to discern the causal relations of Dependent Arising, one can observe clearly one's past existences and future existences by direct knowledge.

Some people may argue that how can we observe the future existences which have not arisen yet? Well, scientists, by studying the revolutions of the earth and the moon, can predict exactly the date and the time of the moon's eclipse and the earth's eclipse. Similarly by tracing the causal relations of mentality-materiality backwards and forwards, one can observe one's past existences as well as future existences. The concentrated, pure mind which has been properly trained can see the past as well as the future.

There are meditation centres called **"International Pa-auk Forest Buddha Sāsana Meditation Centres"** in Myanmar where meditators from many countries are practising tranquillity meditation and insight meditation according to the Buddha's teachings. Many meditators can observe their past existences and future existences satisfactorily in verifying the causal relations of Dependent Arising *(Paṭiccasamuppāda),* the important discourse which explains the round of rebirth of all beings rationally.[11]

http://www.dhammadownload.com

References

1 *Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, "Scientific Evidences for Past Existences and Future Existences," published in Myanmar language. Seventh Printing, P. 196-200.*

2 *Ibid., P. 200-205.*

3 *Ibid., p. 195*

4 *Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, "Two Paths for Future Existences", published in Myanmar language, Third Printing, p. 58-61.*

5 *Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, "Scientific Evidences for Past Existences and Future Existences," Seventh Printing, P. 212-213.*

6 *Narada Mahā Thera, "The Buddha and His Teachings". Published by Singapore Buddhist Meditation Centre, pp. 233-249.*

7 *Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, "Scientific Evidences for Past Existences and Future Existences," Seventh Printing, P. 117.*

8 *Ibid. 170-171.*

9 *Ibid. 165-168.*

10 *Gina Cerminara, "Many Mansions: The Edgar Cayce Story of Reincarnation". a Signet Book.*

11 *Pa-auk Tawya Sayadaw and Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, "Breakthrough in Samatha Meditation and Vipassanā Meditation," Yangon, pp. 51-75.*

http://www.dhammadownload.com

4

Evidences for Future Existences

If one believes in past existences, one can also believe in future existences for the present life is the future existence of the past life.

There are also many concrete evidences to verify the future rebirth after death in the present existence. The following evidences will be described briefly but precisely.

(1) Evidences from the Buddhist Canons,
(2) The Investigations of Venerable Mahā Mogallāna,
(3) Contact with the Dead through a Medium with Psychic Power,
(4) Direct Contact with Dead Persons,
(5) Knowing Future Existences with Divine Eye, the Supernormal Power of Knowing Rebirth according to Kamma and the Supernormal Power of Knowing Future Existences.

1 Evidences from the Buddhist Canons

(1) The rich man **Anāthapiṇḍika,** who donated the

http://www.dhammadownload.com

great Jetavana monastery to the Buddha, was reborn in Tusitā realm after death. The deity came to Jetavana at midnight, illuminating the whole monastery, paid obeisance respectufully to the Buddha and said, "Jetavana has been a permanent residence for the Buddha and the Saṁgha. So I am very much delighted, Reverend Sir." The Buddha told the monks about this incident.[1]

(2) While the Buddha was residing in Jetavana monastery, the stingy rich Brahmin, *Adinnapubbaka,* did not call for a doctor to heal his son, **Maṭṭhakuṇḍalī**, who was suffering from jaundice and indigestion. He enquired about a suitable medicine among the practitioners of indigenous medicine and prepared the medicine himself. The medicine did not cure his son's ailment and his son's condition got worse. Finally he invited a practitioner of indigenous medicine to his house. The practitioner knew that he could not cure the Brahmin's son. So he left without giving any treatment, saying 'I have an important business to attend to."

The Brahmin moved his sick son to the portico at the entrance of his house, because he didn't want his friends who might come to see his son to enter his house lest they would notice his great possessions. When the Buddha looked at the world early in the mornig, he saw Maṭṭhakuṇḍalī. Though the boy was 16 years old, he had not performed any meritorious deed on account of his wrong belief. The Buddha also knew that the boy would die soon and would be reborn in a woeful abode. So on his almsround the Buddha stood at the gate of the Brahmin's house and sent out rays so that the boy took notice of him.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

On seeing the glorious, graceful Buddha, Maṭṭhakuṇḍalī developed deep respect for the Buddha. Billions of wholesome minds arose and dissolved leaving billions of good kammas in Maṭṭhakuṇḍalī's mental stream while he developed respect for the Buddha. The Buddha knew that one of these good kammas would condition the boy's rebirth in a celestial abode after death. So the Buddha proceeded on his alms-round. Maṭṭhakuṇḍalī watched the Buddha with respect as far as he could see the Buddha. Then he died and immediately was reborn as a deity in a golden mansion surrounded by one thousand female deities in Tāvatiṁsā realm.

Maṭṭhakuṇḍalī could enjoy great celestial luxury for just developing respect to the Buddha for a short time before he died. If we can develop deep reverence heartily to the Supreme Buddha throughout our whole life, we shall certainly reap great benefits beyond description.

The stingy Brahmin went to the cemetary everyday and wept at his son's tomb. Maṭṭhakuṇḍalī deity could see his formar father from heaven. So he came down to the human world, assumed the original form of Matthakuṇḍalī, and also wept loudly.

The Brahmin noticed the weeping lad and asked him,

"Why is that you resemble my son so much? Why are you crying?"

"I have a cart, but I have no wheels for the cart. So I cried."

http://www.dhammadownload.com

"I shall make wheels for your cart. Would you like gold wheels or silver wheels?"

"I don't want gold wheels and silver wheels. I want the sun and the moon for the wheels of my cart."

"You are very foolish. Who can get the sun and the moon? What's the benefit of crying for what you cannot get?"

"I am crying to get the sun and the moon which I can see. You are crying for your dead son whom you cannot see. Who is more foolish between the two of us?"

"Well, well, I am more foolish. By the way, who are you?"

"I am your dead son, Maṭṭhakuṇḍalī."

"Where are you now?"

"I am a deity in Tāvatiṁisā realm."

"What good deed have you done to become a deity?"

"I developed deep respect for the Buddha just before I died. Don't be a miser and don't be attached to your wealth. Use your wealth to offer food to the Buddha and the Saṁgha."

The rich Brahmin invited the Buddha and the Saṁgha to have food at his house the next day. The citizens of Sāvatthi were amazed to hear the news that the stingy Brahmin was going to offer food to the Buddha and the Saṁgha. So they came to see him offering food to the Buddha and the Saṁgha.

The Buddha delivered a sermon about *"the mind being the forerunner of all mental entities" (manopubbaṅgamādhammā).* The stingy Brahmin and Matthakundalī

http://www.dhammadownload.com

were enlightened as Stream Enterers. Eighty-four thousand people were also enlightened as Stream Enterers. [2]

(3) At one time the Buddha preached a sermon in the evening near Gaggarā lake in Campā country. A little **frog** came up from the lake and listened to the Dhamma voice with joy and respect. At that moment a cowherd came to the place where the little frog lay still behind the audience and he accidentally pressed his goad on the frog. The frog died and instantly was reborn as a deity in a great gold mansion with many attendants in Tāvatiṁsā realm.

On reflection the deity came to know that his good deed of listening to the Dhamma with respect as a frog had given rise to his celestial existence. So he immediately came down with his mansion to the human realm and paid obeisance to the Buddha. The Buddha knew who he was. However, in order to let the audience know, he asked the deity, "Who are you?"

"I was a little frog from this lake. While I listened to your voice with respect, I was killed and reborn as a deity."

The Buddha asked the question three times and the deity gave the same answer three times. The audience was very much delighted to know the immediate benefits of listening to the Buddha's sermon. The Buddha continued preaching the sermon in detail. Eighty four thousand people gained enlightenment and emancipation from suffering. The deity also became a Stream Enterer.[3]

(4) There lived near Jetavana monastery a Brahmin by the name of **'Todeyya'.** Though he was a multimillion-

http://www.dhammadownload.com

aire, he didn't even give a cent in donation as he embraced a wrong belief. When he died, he became a dog at his house which he was attached to. As the dog could remember about his past existence it followed its formmer son, the lad **Subha,** wherever the latter went. Subha became fond of the dog, kept it well fed, and let it sleep on bed.

The Buddha knew about the dog; so he purposely passed by in front of Subha's house on his alms-round. The dog barked at him, and he stopped, saying, "Oh Todeyya, you didn't pay respect to me when you were a human being and now you bark at me when you become a dog."

The dog was very sad to hear the Buddha's remark. It was ashamed to know that the Buddha knew about its life. So being greatly upset, it lay on a heap of ashes. Seeing the dog lying on ashes, Subha asked his men what was the matter with the dog.

"Yes, master, the monk Gotama called the dog 'Todeyya'," the servants gave the reply.

"The monk Gotama alleged that my father became a dog after death. I cannot bear this insult. I shall clarify the matter with him."

Subha angrily went to Jetavana monastery. The Buddha knew about his coming and was waiting for him. When he approached the Buddha, the Buddha calmly asked him, "Subha, have you got the four gold pots left by your father?"

Though Subha got all the money left by his father, he

http://www.dhammadownload.com

didn't get the four gold pots yet. He was looking for them and the Buddha knew about this. When the Buddha asked him about what he was most interested in, his anger immediately subsided and he answered, "No. I haven't got them yet."

"If you want to get them, go home and feed your dog with good food to the full. When it becomes sleepy, you tap its back with your hand and ask, "Daddy, where did you bury the gold pots? You will get the answer."

Subha gladly went home. He fed his dog to the full. When it became sleepy, he tapped on its back and asked, "Daddy, where did you bury the gold pots?"

So people do not hesitate to call their dog 'daddy' to get gold pots! Subha's dog was very much delighted, because its former son called it 'daddy'. It immediately jumped up and ran to the place where the gold pots were buried. On digging at that place Subha got the gold pots, He thanked the Buddha and became a devotee of the Buddha.[4]

(5) The monk **Tissa** passed away in Jetavana monastery with attachment to a new robe offered by his sister. He became a flea in the robe. When his co-residents were distributing his robes and other articles, the flea was shouting, "I won't give my robe" The Buddha heard the flea shouting from his fragrance chamber. He told the monks to wait for seven days before distributing Tissa's articles. After seven days the flea passed away to a new existence.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

2 The Investigations of Venerable Mahā Mogallāna

The Buddha's left-hand Chief Disciple, Venerable Mahā Mogallāna, was foremost in supernormal power among the Buddha's disciples. He frequently visited celestial abodes as well as woeful abodes to interview celestial beings and woeful beings.

(1) He would ask celestial beings why they could enjoy great luxury. After learning the meritorious deeds they had performed and the great luxuries they enjoyed, he would come down to the human realm and told the people about these.

At one time he saw a new grand mansion in Tavatiṁsā realm and asked the owner how she attained it. The owner of the mansion said, "When the rich lay devotee Visākhā offered Pubbārāma monastery to the Buddha and shared merit, I praised her good deed and hearity said, "Sādhu! Sādhu! (Well done! Well done!) On account of that good deed I got this grand mansion."

(2) Venerable Mahā Moggallāna also visited woeful abodes. He asked woeful beings what were the causes of their suffering. They told him about the immoral actions they had done. He returned to the human realm and told the people about these.

In one story a man had two wives. He paid more attention to the younger wife who was more beautiful. The elder wife became jealous of her and stole her beautiful dress and cosmetic so that she could not beautify herself. Nevertheless the man still had more interest in the younger wife. One night the elder wife sprinkled some itching pow-

http://www.dhammadownload.com

der on the bed of the younger wife. When the younger wife went to bed, she felt itching all over her body with some inflamed swelling appearing on the skin. She wept miserably.

The elder wife died not long afterwards and became a woeful ghost by spontaneous rebirth. She appeared in front of the younger wife one evening while the latter was taking a bath. She was so ugly and so much frightening that the younger wife was shocked and she almost fainted.

"Sister, don't be afraid. I am your elder sister. After my death I became a woeful ghost. I have nothing to eat and to drink. I have no clothes as I have stolen your beautiful clothes. I have inflamed swellings on my skin and I felt itching all over my body as I have done the same to you. Please excuse me and help me. Please offer food and robes to the Saṁgha and share merit with me," said the ghost.

Because of the bad kamma of the past existence one has to become a woeful ghost having nothing to eat, to drink or to wear. If relatives perform meritorious deeds and share merit and if the woeful ghost can rejoice over the good deed and heartily say "Sādhu! Sādhu!" (Well done! Well done!), the good kamma she acquires can free her from the woeful state and provide her with food, drinks and clothes. So powerful are bad kammas and good kammas!

3 Contact with the Dead through a Medium with Psychic Power

When some human beings die they may become spi-

http://www.dhammadownload.com

rits or woeful ghosts. Spirits mean earth-bound deities who belong to *Catumahārājika* realm. Among the spirits, guardian deties of the earth *(bhumma devas)* and spirits of trees *(rukkha devas)* have their own abodes or dwelling-places. Depending on them and living miserably on trees, in bushes, in ravines, gorges, caves, tunnels, old abandoned buildings and cemeteries are spirits called *bhummasita* spirits. They don't have their own abodes. They are popularly known as ghosts, demons, ogres, goblins, etc.

These spirits without abodes are woeful spirits. Since they are devoid of happiness, they are also known as *Vinipātikā asurās.*

Small *Vinipātika* spirits are on the streets, between the houses and in every nook and cranny. They roam on the streets and from place to place to search for remnants of food, snot, mucus, phlegm, etc. They are inferior to human beings. They cannot enter a compound or a house without the permission of the owner. They are superior to men in one aspect, that is, they can make themselves invisible by the power of their kammas. They can protect themselves by this power from being harmed by men.

As human beings differ in rank, status and attitude, the spirits also differ in ability, status and attitude. If a person dies and becomes a spirit, the attitude and the temperament of the two will be more or less the same. As there are good-natured spirits who would like to help human beings there are also evil-natured and wicked spirits who would like to give trouble to human beings.

If a person, after death, is reborn spontaneously as a spirit or a woeful ghost *(peta),* he can make contact with

http://www.dhammadownload.com

his relatives. Such spirits and woeful ghosts who can make contact with human beings are the guardian spirits of trees, the guardian deities of the earth, *bhummasita spirits* and *paradattupa-jīvita woeful ghosts* who live close to human beings. Since the woeful ghosts belong to sense-sphere miserable beings, they are more miserable than *bhummasita* spirits. There are various kinds of woeful ghosts and among them only *paradattupa-jīvita woeful ghosts* can make contact with human beings and can receive the share of merit when their relavives share merit with them.

Bhummasita spirits and woeful ghosts can be reborn spontaneously *(spontaneous rebirth)* or they can be conceived in their mothers` wombs and delivered from the wombs in due course like human beings *(rebirth after being conceived in a womb).*

When they are born by spontaneous rebirth, their bodies are composed of mainly kamma-born fine matter. So they can neither be seen nor touched by human beings. Those with inferior ability cannot make themselves visible, but those with superior ability can make themselves visible.

Althought they are roaming about on the streets and in every nook and cranny, they cannot be seen by our naked eye. However, if we practise to develop the right mental concentration or extrasensory perception, we can see them.

Besides there are people in the world who are endowed with psychic power since birth and who can see spirits and woeful ghosts, and communicate with them. Some well-known persons with psychic power are **Mrs. Leonora Piper** and **Dr. Elizabeth Kubler-Ross** in the United States of America and **Mrs. Estelle Roberts** in England.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

(1) Mrs. Leonora Piper, a White Crow and a Benefactor

Mrs. Leonora Piper was married to William Piper at the age of 22. Three years later she gave birth to a daughter. Then an old wound started giving her trouble. She consulted a blind person with extrasensory perception. She fainted while being examined by that person.

Next week Mrs. Piper attended a regular meeting of that person in which that person communicated with the dead. Mrs. Piper fell into hypnosis. She got up, picked up a writing paper and a pencil from the table, wrote down something quickly and handed the paper to a man in the circle.

When she regained her consciousness, that man thanked her for giving him a message from his dead son. Starting from that time she became a **medium** who made the contact between a spirit and that spirit's former relatives.

In communicating with the spirit world a spirit guide might control Mrs. Piper's tongue to speak the words which the spirit wished her to speak or the spirit guide might control Mrs. Piper's hand to write down automatically what the spirit world liked to communicate.

Thus three persons from the spirit world could send messages through Mrs. Piper simultaneously – one controlled her right hand to write automatically, another controlled her left hand to write down a message, and the third one controlled her tongue to speak out a message. During that time Mrs. Piper would be under hypnosis without any consciousness.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

The world-famous American philosopher, **William James,** Professor of Psychology in Harvard University, supervised Mrs. Piper's contact circle for one and a half years and studied her extrasensory perception. He made the following remark:

> *"If you want to refute the statement that all crows are black, you need not try to show that all crows are not black. You just find a white crow. If you can show a white crow, then that statement that all crows are black is annulled. The white crow I have found is Mrs. Piper. When she is under hypnosis, she can see, hear and know what cannot be normally seen, heard and known."*

Mrs. Piper was invited to England several times. The famous English Physicist, **Sir Oliver Lodge,** arranged Mrs. Piper's contact circle at his house. He often admired Mrs. Piper that on account of her he came to believe in future existences. Mrs. Piper predicted that his son, Raymond, would die in the First World War. That prediction came true.

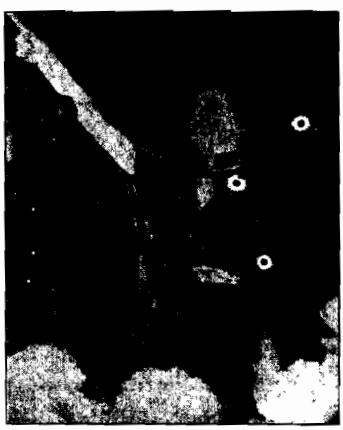
Mrs. Piper died in 1950. When her daughter wrote a book about her, Sir Oliver Lodge wrote in the Introduction as follows.

> *"Mrs. Piper was a great benefactor of mankind. She had done much good to the people by her power of extrasensory perception. She pacified the grief and worry of many broken families by helping them to communicate with their dead beloved ones. She made clear in*

http://www.dhammadownload.com

the most practical and exact manner that there are future existences after death. She also created the chance for scientists to investigate the nature and properties of the mind outside the body."

(2) **Estelle Roberts and the Spirit Red Cloud**



Estelle Roberts in England could see the spirits and communicate with them throughout her life since childhood. She helped the people to communicate with their dead relatives many times from 1925 to 1970.

When Estelle Roberts went out she could see spirits going about on the streets. It was like meeting many people on a busy street in a business quarter, each one going on his way. After seeing the spirits many times, the scene became familiar and normal.

Estelle Roberts was married at the age of eighteen. She bore three children and then her husband was bedridden with chronic illness. So she had to attend to her sick husband as well as to her children and she had to work to support the faimly. Thus she had to go through much hardship and much suffering.

When her husband died, he came to her as a spirit for three nights successively. With a very sad face the spirit called her to come along with him.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

"How can I go along with you?" she asked.

"You die and you come along," said the spirit.

"I cannot die. I have to bring up the children."

The spirit didn't say anything more and he departed sadly.

On the day before the burial day the spirit came again and apologised her, "I do not understand. I do not need you any more. You need not attend to me any more. I can live on by myself. What you said was true. Everyone lives on in the spirit world after death from the human existence. It is very surprising."

"As you are alive after death, all other dead persons are also alive after their death in the human existence. I have to tell to the people about this so that the whole world knows about it," said Estelle Roberts.

At that time Estelle Roberts was thirty years old. She married Arther Roberts the next year. As she didn't have to work any more, she had more time to think about the spirits who came to her. She also attended regularly spiritual meetings in which living relatives communicated with the spirits of their dead beloved ones through a medium who had extrasensory perception.

Then the mediums told Estelle Roberts, "You are also a medium. You have many things to do. When the spirit world chooses you and gives you responsibility, don't refuse to accept it."

Estelle Roberts wanted to use her ability of extrasensory perception for the benefits of the people. One night

http://www.dhammadownload.com

she sat alone in darkness to have contact with the spirit world. Then she heard a voice speaking in magnificent, exact English:

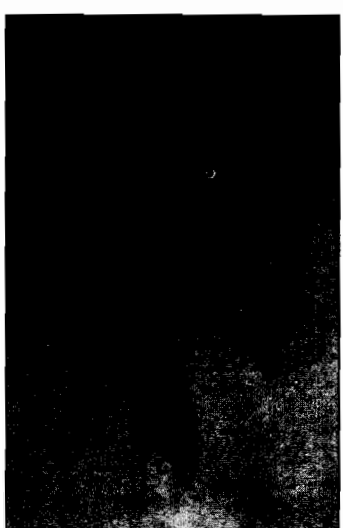
"I come to serve the world. I shall work with you."

"Who are you?" asked Estelle Roberts.

"You know me as Red Cloud. I shall be your spirit guide," answered the voice.

At that moment there appeared a man's head surrounded by light with olive complexion, dark eyes and thin dark beard.

Red Cloud was learned and powerful. He served as Estelle's guiding spirit and guardian for more than fifty years. In cooperation with Estelle Roberts he demonstrated the existence of the spirit world to the people in a practical and wonderful manner. He also cured many patients of their chronic diseases.



He also demonstrated the difference between the spirit world and the physical world known to scientists in a surprising mannar.

For example, one week after meeting Red Cloud,Estelle invited her husband Arther to sit in front of her in the sitting room in darkness. They were sitting face to face on a chair

http://www.dhammadownload.com

each. Soon brilliant search light in golden colour fell on Estelle Roberts directly from above as a beam of search light fell on a dancer on the stage. Arther's response was very quick. He remarked:

"Estelle, where are you? Where have you gone to?"

"I'm sitting in front of you. I don't go anywhere."

"It's impossible. There's no one on your chair. I can see the flooring and the back-rest of your chair."

"In that case you count the holes in the cane-flooring of the chair."

Arther bent forward and touched the cane-flooring with his fore-finger to count the holes. He didn't touch Estelle Roberts.

"Twenty-eight holes in a row," answered Arther.

Then the search light immediately disappeared. Estelle and Arther were sitting as before in darkness. Arther instantly turned on the room light and counted the holes in the cane-flooring of the chair. There were indeed twenty-eight holes in a row!

A few years later, Estelle Roberts became famous. A photographer took a snapshot of Estelle Roberts sitting on a chair. When the film was developed, there was the empty chair but Estelle Roberts was not on it!

The Secret Message between two Lovers

One day **a maiden** was present in a spiritual meeting of Estelle Roberts. She wanted to contact with her lover who died recently in an accident. Her lover spirit arrived immediately and gave a message to Estelle again and again.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

Estelle was hesitant to speak out that message; so she asked the maiden: "Did your lover use to speak harsh speech?"

"No, what did he say?"

"He was speaking repeatedly, 'Not bloody likely'."

"Is that so? Ha! Ha! That was a well-known message from a Bernard Shaw's play. When my lover and I were together, we agreed to use that message to inform the living one if one of us dies".

The spirits who are born by spontaneous rebirth remember their past existences and their sweethearts. They still love their sweethearts and follow them wherever they go. Estelle Roberts noticed that their temperament, behaviour and the manner they spoke did not change.

Still Remembering from the Spirit World

Estelle's youngest son, **Terrence Roberts,** did not believe in extrasensory perception and he did not want to hear about the spirit world. Estelle wanted him to know about the future existences of people when they died. But she didn't want to say in a forceful manner.

When Terrence was twenty years old, he became a young officer in the Royal Air Force. On one weekend he came home with a girl friend to see his mother. While they were talking at the sitting room, Estelle Roberts casually said to her son, calling him Terry: "Terry, a friend of yours is standing by your side."

"Really? What is his name?"

Terrence took it as a joke and responded playfully.

"His name is Jimmy Macfarlane. Do you have a friend

http://www.dhammadownload.com

by that name?"

"Oh yes! Is he dead?"

"He died about a year ago. Why does he keep calling you 'Toady'? "

"Really? Oh God... I have not been called 'Toady' for many years. Only Jimmy called me so. When we were schoolboys, I reared three or four toads as I loved them. So he called me 'Toady'. Mummy, do you hear him calling me 'Toady'?"

"How can I know if he didn't call you so?"

"How did he die, mummy?"

"He served in the Navy. During the Second World War, while their ship was anchored at Scotland, the enemy planes bombed their ship and he was thrown away to the sea. He drowned in the sea. He said that his mother is till living in their old house."

Terrence suddenly got up and held his girl friend's hand.

"Come, let's go to Jimmy's mother. I know the place".

They came back about two hours later. They had talked to Jimmy's mother and they found that what Estelle Roberts said was true.

"Terry, your friend Jimmy left a message for you. You watch out at nine o'clock Monday morning. He will show you some sign that you can remember," said Estelle Roberts.

On Monday morning Terrence must report for duty at his office. He overslept, however. So he was rushing through a church yard to report for duty on time. Just then

http://www.dhammadownload.com

the clock upon the clock tower rang nine times. Terrence bent down a little to pass under a low branch of a pine tree. His cap, however, was caught on the branch and thrown onto the ground.

While Terrence picked up his cap, he remembered Jimmy's message. At the same time he also remembered that Jimmy used to tip off his school cap time and again on their school-boy days.

"Oh, my friend Jimmy, you still remember me from the spirit world!"

Communication between the Public and Their Dead Relatives

For over fifty years Estelle Roberts gave her service to the public to help them to communicate with their dead relatives from the spirit world. The public communication with the dead was held in prominent public halls all over England as well as in Europe and Ireland. Thousands of people usually filled the public halls to have a chance to communicate with their dead relatives.

Communication between the public and the spirit world at Royal Albert Hall, London

http://www.dhammadownload.com

The news about holding public communications with the dead was usually announced in advance in journals and newspapers. So people thronged the public hall on the appointed day. Many dead relatives from the spirit world also came to the place of communication.

Estelle Roberts went to the hall one hour in advance and made contact with the spirit world.

"I come here to form a bridge between you and your living relatives. I shall help you to communicate with them. You all please help me too."

The persons from the spirit world also wanted to communicate with their relatives. They wanted to tell their relatives that they did not die and that they were still alive. They wanted to put an end to the grief and worry of their parents and relatives. They had tried to contact with their relatives, but they couldn't. So they had been waiting for the golden opportunity to communicate with their relatives through a medium.

The time for communication arrived. Members of the Board of Chairmen and Estelle Roberts took their places. The spiritual meeting began with a prayer. Then a prominent member of the board of chairmen gave an introductory speech.

Then Estelle Roberts walked to the front of the stage, holding the microphone in her hand. Invisible persons from the spirit world surrounded her, imploring her to let him or her communicate with his or her parents. Estelle had to request them to speak one after another.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

The audience was waiting in great expectation. Estelle Roberts, pointing her right hand towards the audience, said into the microphone, "Molly Johnson, your daughter Lezlie gave you a message. 'Mother, you looked at my photograph and wept this morning. I'm sad to see you weeping. I'm with you. I don't die. I'm alive. I talked to you, but you couldn't hear me. Mother, please don't cry any more'."

Mrs. Molly Johnson was very pleased to hear the message.

Estelle Roberts announced again, "Mr. Herrickson, I had a message for you from your son Johny. He said he died by motorcyle accident. Here is his message, 'Daddy and Mum, I'm terribly sorry to make you unhappy with my accident. It happened so quickly that I couldn't avoid it. But I don't die. I still live on. Don't worry about me. I have everything I need. Don't keep that motorcyle. I can now move faster than a motorcycle."

Some messages were short, some were long, and some were not clear. Only the persons concerned would understand. Those who received the messages were very much delighted shouting words of thanks to Estelle Roberts. The spiritual meeting lasted about one hour. Then the spirit guide, Red Cloud, reminded Estelle Roberts to stop the meeting. He always watched the situation carefully and he didn't want Estelle to be overburdened and harmed.

When Estelle Roberts announced that it was time to stop the spiritual meeting, many people in the audience and many persons from the spirit world felt frustrated, because they didn't have the chance to communicate that day.

It is good news to know that when people died and

http://www.dhammadownload.com

were born in the spirit world, they still remembered and loved thier parents and relatives in the human existene.[6]

4 Direct Contact with Dead Persons

(1) The **little frog** from **Gaggarā lake** in Campā country listened to the Dhamma voice of the Buddha with joy and respect. When it was killed by a cowherd, it became a deity in Tāvatiṁsa realm. The deity came down with his mansion to the human realm and paid obeisance to the Buddha. When asked by the Buddha he told his story so that the audience knew how he died as a frog and was reborn as a deity. This is one instance of making direct contact with the dead.

(2) **Maṭṭhakuṇḍalī**, the son of the stingy, rich Brahmin, died and became a deity in Tāvatiṁsā realm for his good kamma of developing respect to the Buddha. He came to his father and persuaded his father to offer food to the Buddha and the Saṁgha. This is also an incident of direct contact between the dead and the living.

(3) In the story of the **woeful ghost** the elder wife of a man died and became a woeful ghost by spontaneous rebirth and then the ghost appeared in front of the younger wife to ask for help. This story illustrates another instance of direct contact between the dead and the living.

(4) Venerable **Mahā Moggallāna** went to the celestial abodes as well as to the woeful abodes to interview the celestial beings and the woeful beings about their past kammas. So, if we have supernormal power, we can communicate with the dead directly.

(5) If the readers are not satisfied with these evi-

http://www.dhammadownload.com

dences from the Buddhist Canons and they want to know modern evidences, they could study the spiritual meetings of **Estelle Roberts** conducted under the guidance of the learned spirit, **Red Cloud**, from 1925 to 1970, in which they helped living relatives to speak to the dead by **"direct voice contact."**

Estella Roberts and Red Cloud used a small trumpet as an instrument to produce the voice of the spirit. Red Cloud taught the spirits how to use the trumpet.

The spiritual meeting by direct voice contact was conducted at night in a quiet atmosphere. The persons who want to make direct contact with the dead sat around Estelle holding hands together in the form of a circle in Estelle's living room. A small trumpet with luminous paint shining faintly to be visible in the dark was placed in the middle of the circle. The windows were closed and thick curtains prevented outside light from entering the room.

A soft music was played as a background music. All persons in the circle were asked to relax their minds. If a person was thinking seriously or having doubt about direct voice contact, the contact with the spirit world would be disturbed. The spirits who made the contact must also relax their minds and must be free from worry or anxiety. Estelle was put under hypnosis by Red Cloud. When all conditions were right, the communication by direct voice contact from the spirit world came incessantly.

The spiritual meeting began with the greetings from Red Cloud: "Ladies and gentlemen, may all of you be healthy and happy." Then the trumpet moved around the room very fast without striking the ceiling or the furniture.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

When a spirit wanted to speak to a person in the circle, the trumpet stopped near the ear of the person, and the voice of the spirit appeared. Although the voices of spirits coming out of the same trumpet might not be different in sound, their manner of speaking, their choices of words, their enunciation and intonation were different. So listeners could recognize who were speaking.

For example, **Mrs. Ellen Hadfield** was present in one spiritual meeting. Her dead daughter, who became a spirit, spoke to her through the trumpet. She was certain that it was her dead daughter because the manner of speaking, the enunciation and intonation were the same as her daughter used to speak. Mrs. Hadfield explained this matter to newspapermen.

Lovers from different worlds can be together

A distinguished person who made contact with his wife in Estelle's spiritual meetings by direct voice contact was **Sir Henry Segrave.** Sir Henry Segrave had great ambition to break the record in world car-racing. While he was practising with a race car in Daytona Beach, Florida, a person from England wrote a letter to him to inform him the message given by the spirit of a former world champion in car racing in a spiritual meeting. The message was a warning to Sir Henry Segrave to take care in racing.

When Sir Henry Segrave returned to England he studied some spiritual meetings. Not long after that he took part in motor-boat racing in Windermere Lake, the largest lake in England. He was trying to break the world record when his motor-boat capsized, killing him.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

Sir Henry Segrave became a spirit after death and he tried to make contact with his wife in the spiritual meetings of Estelle Roberts by direct voice contact. On hearing this news **Lady Segrave** came to tthe Spiritual Meeting of Estelle Roberts.

Soon after the meeting began the trumpet stopped by the side of Lady Segrave. A word 'Di' came out of the trumpet - the word only Sir Henry Segrave used to call his wife lovingly. Lady Segrave became very excited, knowing that it was really her husband speaking to her from the spirit world. Then the spirit could not control the trumpet and it fell to the floor.

Red Clould's voice appeared clearly: "Don't be upset. The trumpet dropped to the floor because Lady Segrave became excited and Sir Henery Segrave was not skilful yet in using the trumpet. I shall help him to be successful next time."

In the next time as well as in many times afterwards Lady Segrave was calm and peaceful and she could relax her mind well. Sir Henry Segrave too became skiful in using the trumpet and he could speak in low tone or high tone as he liked to his wife.

"Di, I was with you on the fourteenth."

"Do you remember that day?"

"Oh, yes. It's your birth day."

"Were you in the car with me?"

"Of course. Be careful with your driving. You drive too fast."

"Don't worry, I'm a skilful driver."

http://www.dhammadownload.com

"Well, wasn't I a skilful driver too?"

They talked to each other delightfully for many minutes day after day for many months. They talked intimately about their old days, about their house affairs, about friends, about Henry's father, about minor things that could be understood only by them. The two lovers could be together again though they were in different worlds.

Lovers can meet and enjoy the time together behind the death curtain!

After communicating with her dead husband for one year by direct voice contact, Lady Segrave anounced to the world through newspapers with concrete evidences that her husband was still alive in the spirit world.

"It is natural that parents and sons, husbands and wives, relatives, brothers and sisters must depart from one another by death. When they are separated by the wall of death, everyone is stricken with grief and despair. It's my duty to help those who are overwhelmed and burnt by grief due to the departure of their beloved ones.

"As I have been very happy and peaceful because I could be together with my husband in the spiritual meetings by direct voice contact although he has passed away more than a year ago, I wish all the people like me to be happy and peaceful."

For this bold performance by Lady Segrave, both the spirit guide, Red Cloud, and Sir Henry Segrave praised her

http://www.dhammadownload.com

with applause.

Lady Segrave died in 1968. She was also reborn as a spirit and could be together with her husband in the spirit world. They came together to Estelle Roberts and thanked her heartily for her contribution to their happiness for many years. [6]

A Message from the Spirit World

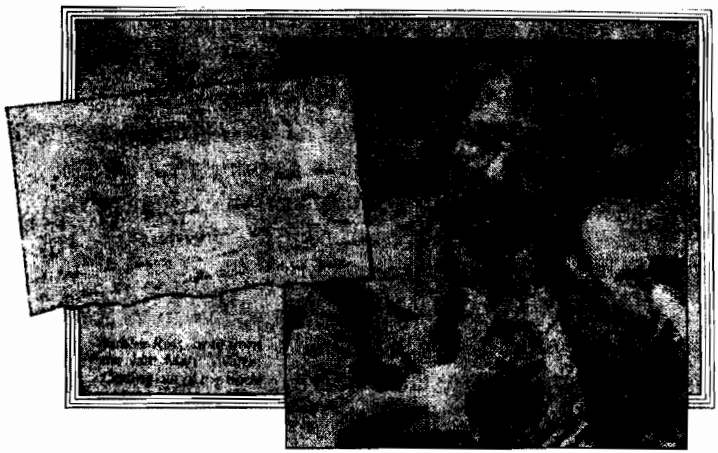
There was a special news in News Week journal published on May 1, 1978. An old American lady by the name of **Mary Swarts** passed away and came to thank **Dr. Elizabeth Kubler-Ross** in the form of a spirit. On request by Dr. Kubler-Ross, the spirit wrote a message of thanks.

In the United States of America there are welfare committees to look after lonely aged persons who are far away from their sons and daughters. Dr. Kubler-Ross worked in one of these committees.

Dr. Kubler-Ross has been endowed with extrasensory perception since birth. Some people became spirits after death, and they came to Dr. Kubler-Ross to say words of thanks. Mary Swarts also became a spirit after death. The spirit appeared in front of Dr. Kubler-Ross and thanked her for all her help.

Dr. Kubler-Ross requested the Spirit to use the pen and the writing pad on her table and write a letter of greetings to a common friend known to both of them. The spirit complied with the request, wrote the letter and signed it. She also put down the date. This letter was printed in the News Week journal.

http://www.dhammadownload.com



Dr. Elizabeth Kubler-Ross and Mary Swart's Letter

Dr. Kubler-Ross also met spirit guides, and they told her about the spirit world. The American public was very interested in the research of Dr. Kubler-Ross and other scholars about the spirit world. When a survey was made in 1978, seventy percent of Americans belived in the next existence after death.

5 Knowing Future Existences With Divine Eye and Other Supernormal Powers

In Buddhism the Buddha described seven kinds of mundane supernormal knowledge which demonstrate the tremendous power of the mind. The Buddha also gave instructions how to develop these supernormal powers. So persons who are willing to possess this supernormal know-

http://www.dhammadownload.com

ledge nowadays can aquire it by practising under the guidance of a good, competent teacher.

Out of the seven kinds of supernormal knowledge. the one known as **'Divine Eye'** *(Dibbacakkhuñāṇa* or *Cutūpapāta-ñāṇa)* can see beings passing away and beings reappearing in the thirty-one planes of existence. *This observation definitely proves that the beings are reborn in new existences after death.*

The divine eye surpasses the human eye in its ability to see visible objects. It can see not only coarse and gross objects that are visible to the human eye but also very subtle objects and celestial objects which are far away and hidden. In fact it can see all living beings and inanimate things in the whole universe as well as in the thirty-one planes of existence. The divine eye of the Buddha could see all living beings in a hundred thousand crores of world systems.

Through that supernormal knowledge, a person can see sentient beings who are on the verge of death and beings just after taking conception, those who are low-born or high-born, those who are beautiful or ugly and those who attain a happy existence or a miserable existence.

After seeing the denizens of the woeful states suffering misfortune through his divine eye, he reflected "What kinds of deeds have these beings of the woeful states done to suffer such awful miseries?"Thereupon, *Yathākammūpaga-ñāṇa,* the knowledge which enables him to see the deeds of demerit done by these beings arises in him.

Likewise after seeing through his divine eye the immense happiness enjoyed by sentient beings of the realms

http://www.dhammadownload.com

of humans, Devas and Brahmās, he reflected "What kinds of deeds have these humans, Devas and Brahmās done to enjoy such progressively magnificent bliss in their respective realms?"

Thereupon, *Yathākammūpaga-ñāṇa*, the knowledge which enables him to see the meritorious deeds done by those beings arises in him.

> *Yathākammūpaga-ñāṇa, the knowledge of faring according to deeds, that knows living beings being born according to their deeds (kammas) knows not only the future existences of sentient beings but also the causes ('kammas') for the arising of those new existences.* [7]

Based on divine eye one can develop not only the knowledge faring according to deeds but also the knowledge of seeing future events and future worlds known as *'Anāgataṁsa-ñāṇa' (the Knowledge of the Future).*

Four *asaṅkheyya* (great aeon) and one hundred thousand world cycles ago **Buddha Dīpaṅkarā,** accompanied by four hundred thousand Arahants, walked into Rammāvatī City along the main road. Many citizens and many deities welcomed them by beating drums.

At that time, by the power of the Buddha, human beings could see deities and vice versa. Both human beings and deities raised their palms together to the forehead in reverence to the Buddha and the Saṁgha and followed them.

The young hermit **Sumedhā,** though he attained supernormal powers, tried to repair the part of the road allot-

http://www.dhammadownload.com

ted to him with his physical labour. Before the repair was completed, he saw the glorious Buddha coming. He pondered:

"Today I ought to sacrifice my life in the presence of the Buddha. Let him not tread on the muddy road with discomfort. Let the Buddha and all the bhikkhus tread on my back as a bridge. Using my body as footpath by the Buddha and the bhikkhus will definitely bring long lasting welfare and happiness."

Having made up his mind thus, he spread the leather mat on the muddy road and lay prostrate on it. Then the aspiration to become a Buddha arose in him thus: "If I so desire, this very day I can become an Arahant. But what does it profit me to realize Nibbāna alone as an ordinary bhikkhu? I will exert my utmost for the attainment of omniscient Buddhahood."

At that moment a young Brahmin maiden named **Sumittā** came to join the people. She brought eight lotus blooms to honour the Buddha. As soon as her eyes fell on Sumedhā she was seized with a sudden great love for him. She gave him five lotus blooms, saying: "Venerable hermit, you may offer these lotus flowers to the Buddha. The remaining three blooms are for my own offering to the Buddha. Dear hermit, throughout the period you are fulfilling perfections for Buddhahood, may I be the partner sharing your life."

Sumedhā accepted the flowers and offered them to the Buddha, praying for the attainment of Buddhahood. Sumittā also offered three lotus blooms to the Buddha and prayed that her wish to be a partner sharing Sumedha's

http://www.dhammadownload.com

life throughout the period he was fulfilling perfections for Buddhahood be fulfilled.

Observing the remarkable scene Buddha Dīpaṅkarā stopped and exercised his supernormal knowledge of seeing into the future to find out whether the prayers of Sumedhā and Sumittā would be fulfilled or not. The Buddha's *'Anāgataṁsa-ñāṇa'* could see into the future without limit and without obstruction. Then he uttered the prophecy:

> *"Monks, this hermit Sumedha will become an Enlightened One after innumerable aeons, to be exact, four asaṅkheyya and one hundred thousand world cycles from now. He will be known as Buddha Gotama.*
>
> *"The mother and the father of Buddha Gotama will be Queen Māyā Devī and King Suddhodana. The pair of his Chief Disciples will be Upatissa and Kolita (Venerable Sāriputta and Venerable Mahāmogallāna).*
>
> *"The monk, Ānanda by name, will be his attendant. The pair of female Chief Disciples will be Khemā and Upallavanā Therī".*

Buddha Dīpaṅkarā also said to Sumedha:

> *"O Sumedha, this girl Sumittā will be your partner sharing life with you, assisting you with equal fervour and deed for your attainment of Buddhahood. She will be pleasing to you with her every thought, word and deed. She will be lovely in appearance, sweet in*

http://www.dhammadownload.com

speech and delightful to the heart. In her final existence, in your Dispensation as a Buddha, she will become a female disciple who will receive your spiritual inheritance of Arahatship complete with supernormal powers." [8]

The mind associated with supernormal knowledge is amazingly powerful. The Buddha's prophecy will never go wrong. It will be always exactly correct.

Therefore, there should be no doubt about the actual existence of our past lives as well as our future lives. Many scientific concrete evidences bear witness to this statement.

If we find a white crow, the statement "All crows are black" is invalidated and nullified. Similarly as we have found many concrete evidences about past existences and future existences, the belief that "past lives and future lives do not exist" is totally invalidated and nullified.

References

1 *Uparipaṇṇāsa Pāḷi, Anāthapiṇḍikovāda Sutta.*

2 *Dhammapada Commentary.*

3 *Vimāna Story, 201.*

4 *Dīghanikāya Commentary, 1, 317.*

5 *Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, "Scientific Evidences of Past Existences and Future Existences", Seventh*

http://www.dhammadownload.com

Printing. pp. 75-86.

6 *Ibid., pp. 86-98.*

7 *Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, "Samatha", Advanced Level, Vol. II, pp. 151-158.*

8 *Bhaddanta Vicittasārābhivasa, "The Great Chronicle of Buddhas", Vol. I, Part I, pp. 48-58.*

http://www.dhammadownload.com

5

Who the Real Creator Is

1 The Most Powerful Agent

Cittena nīyati loko.
The mind leads the world.
Cittena parikassati.
The mind attracts everything to follow it.
Cittassa ekadhammassa sabbevavasamanva gūīti.
Everything always has to follow the wish of one thing which is the mind. (Saṁyutta Nikāya, Citta Sutta)

The mind of every person leads the life of that person. And persons are leading the world. So it is the mind that leads the whole world. All the world has to follow the wish of the mind.

All towns and cities, buildings and sky-scrapers, motor-cars and trains, aeroplanes and space ships, modern science and advanced technology, culture, literature and arts, etc., are created and controlled by the mind. So there should be no doubt about the infinite power of the mind.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

2 The View of Psychologists

Psychologists also support the statement that the mind has infinite power. Knowing the ability of the mind, they say: "The mind has infinite power. It can do anything. It can even move a mountain if one really believes that the mind can do so. Richness or poverty, success or failure depend on the mind.

"I must succeed. I must be rich. My mind will surely bring success and richness." If one really has such **belief** and **confidence** in one's ability, the strong **will** to succeed and to be rich, the strenuous **effort** to accomplish success, and the **knowledge** of the right way to do, then one will surely succeed and become rich.

"If one does not believe the ability of the mind that it can accomplish anything, clinging to the notion that one shall have to live on as a poor man, he will surely be poor for life."

If we look at the present world, those who have knowledge and foresight, do appropriate business with great effort and they achieve success and prosperity. Those who do not want to do any particular job strenuously will be poor for life even if they may pray to an Almighty God for blessing everyday.

Therefore, it is very obvious that we ourselves, not an unseen and unknown Almighty God, are creating our fate and fortune.

3 Is the Mind the Brain?

Since the mind controls our actions, our behaviour, our thought, our feeling, our perception and our consider-

http://www.dhammadownload.com

ation, it is the most essential and most important power we possess.

However, as the mind is invisible and it cannot be detected by science instruments, some scientists assume that the mind does not exist and the functions of the mind are carried out by the brain. That means they take the brain to be the mind.

They know that all the nerves in the body are controlled by the brain and they estimate that the brain contains over three billion neurons as communication instruments to receive messagges in the form of electric impulses from the various nervous systems and to send instructions to these systems.

Thus the communication system of the brain is much more complicated and refined than the communication systems of the world big cities like New York, London and Tokyo. As the communication system of the brain is very systematic and very refined, some scholars even think that it must be created by an Almighty God.

In reality the number of beings in the universe is uncountable. All sentient beings possess the mind and the brain. The mental attitude and the thinking power of all beings are different from one another. Even in a person, his attitude and his thought are changing all the time. So, if an Almighty God were controlling all the thoughts of living beings, he would be the busiest person with the greatest worry in the world. He would be in the most pitiable condition. Why didn't he live happily and peacefully by himself?

When human beings did not know the true causes for

http://www.dhammadownload.com

torrential rain, great flood, violent storms, earthquakes, explosion of volcanoes, lightning strikes, periods of famine and pestilence, they thought that gods were angry and creating these phenomena or an Almighty God was creating them. Such thought and belief belong to the 'View of the Wrong Cause'. When human knowledge develops and people understand the right causes, they come to know clearly that all natural phenomena arise on account of natural causes and that they are not the creation of any God.

Here in the case of the mind also, as scholars do not know what the mind really is and neither do they know the true nature, and the functions of the mind, they believe that the brain functions as the mind and it is being controlled by a God. In fact the brain is just matter and matter can neither think nor feel, neither can it be happy or angry. And there is no *Almighty Creator* in the thirty-ones planes of existence.

The human mind knows the nature and properties of matter. It can therefore create many wonderful things such as super-sonic jets, space ships, space station, satellites, satellite comminication systems, computers, cordless telephones and televisions. Those who are devoid of science knowledge might think that all these wonderful things are created by an omnipotent person. In reality it is the mind which creates them.

Today the amazing super computers can solve problems in seconds which may take a hundred mathematicians a month to solve by conventional methods. A computer can keep millions of data in its memory and reproduce the wanted facts immediately. Computers have been

http://www.dhammadownload.com

designed to play chess or soccer. But if we ask, "Does a computer have innate intelligence and self-thinking power?", the answer is "No." Why?

A computer cannot think by itself. It has no innate intelligene and no desire to go here or there. If we talk to it about heartbroken stories, it will feel no pain in the chest and will not shed tears. If we tell jokes or play lively music to it, it will neither laugh nor feel delighted. It has no feeling. It can do only that which is pre-programmed.

The brain resembles a computer. Since all the nerves in the body meet in the brain and the brain is the central controlling organ, it is very important. But it cannot feel nor think by itself. As the computer is controlled by man, even so is the brain controlled by the mind.

Professor Sir John Eccles, the most prominent Neurologist who performed a special research on the brain made the following remark:

"The study on the structure of the brain reveals that the brain is a kind of computer run by a ghost. The ghost here means something that cannot be detected by instruments which are used to detect material things." That ghost should be taken as the mind.

All the sense data that come from the eyes, the ears, the rose, the tongue and the body are stored up in the memory of the brain. A new sense datum that comes from any of the sense doors is matched with the data stored up in the brain and the brain decides what sense object it is. These assumptions are not correct from the point of view of Abhidhamma.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

Abhidhamma Explains the Working of the Mind

Accroding to Abhidhamma the **'mind'**, is a combination of **'consciousness'** *(citta)* and **'mental factors'** *(cetasikas)*. They arise together and dissolve together. More than a trillion minds arise and dissolve one after another consecutively every second.

'Consciousness' is 'the awareness of the senses'. It is influenced in many ways by mental factors. There are 52 mental factors — 13 are neutral, 14 are immoral or unwholesome, and 25 are wholesome and beautiful.

The **neutral mental factors** consist of **'contact'** *(phassa)* between the mind and the sense object, **'feeling'** *(vedanā)* that enjoys the sense object, **'perception'** *(saññā)* that takes note of the particulars of the sense object, **'volition'** *(cetanā)* that acts on and prompts its concomitants to perform an action, **'concentration'** *(ekaggatā)* that unites its concomitants and fixes the mind on a sense object, the **'wish'** or 'desire' *(chanda)* to do something, **'effort'** or 'energy' *(vīriya)*, etc. They associate with both wholesome minds and unwholesome minds.

Immoral mental factors include **'ignorance'** *(moha)* of the true nature of sense objects, **'greed'** *(lobha)* which craves for money, wealth, sense pleasure, etc., **'anger'** or 'hatred' *(dosa)* which produces ill-will and aversion. These three immoral mental factors are known as **'evil roots'** which make the mind unwholesome and which are the root causes of all evil actions in the world. They give rise to **'wrong view'** *(diṭṭhi)*, **'pride'** or 'conceit' *(māna)*, **'moral shamelessness'** *(ahirika)*, **'moral fearlessness'** *(anottappa)*, etc.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

Beautiful mental factors comprises **'wisdom'** *(paññā* or *amoha).*, **'greedlessness'** or 'generosity' *(alobha)*, ***'hatelessness'*** *or 'goodwill' or 'loving-kindness'* (adosa), **'moral shame'** *(hirī)*, 'moral dread' *(ottappa)*, **'compassion'***(karuṇā)*, **'sympathetic joy'** *(muditā)*, etc. The first three - wisdom, greedlessness, hatelessness - are known as **'moral roots'**, which make the mind wholesome and which are the root causes of all good actions in the world.

When a visible object strikes the eye, its image appears in the clear matter of the eye *(cakkhupasāda)*. The adverting consciousness directs the mental stream towards this image and eye-consciousness sees it, the receiving consciousness receives it, the investigating consciousness investigates it, and the consciousness which decides whether the sense object is good or bad arises. Depending on that decision, wholesome or unwholesome consciousness arises seven times as *javana* consciousness, enjoying the sense object. Two registering consciousness follows, continuing to enjoy the sense object. Then sense object dissolves and life-continuum flows on as usual.

The dissolved sense object reappears in the life-continuum which serves as the mind door capable of taking past sense objects. Then several cognitive series of consciousness arise rapidly one after another, discerning the form, shape, size, detailed features and name of the sense object. The mind works much faster than a computer.

Now every consciousness is accompanied by seven essential mental factors-contact, feeling, perception, volition, concentration, psychic life and attention. They help

http://www.dhammadownload.com

consciousness to be aware of the sense object.

The mind, i.e. the combination of consciousness and mental factors, dissolves soon after it arises. However, before it dissolves, consciousness and mental factors transmit their properties to the next arising mind. Perception transmits the detailed features of the sense object which it has perceived; feeling transmits the sensation which it has enjoyed; consciousness transmits what it has known, and so on. These data are conveyed from one mind to another. So they remain in the mental stream. It is similar to storing data in the memory of a computer.

Just as a computer can produce the data it has stored up immediately, so too the mind can recall the stored-up data immediately. Consequently we can remember what we have learnt and experienced since childhood. We may forget many data, but we can recall them under hypnosis.

Again at the time of death, soon after the death-consciousness perishes in the present existence, rebirth-consciousness arises in the next existence without any break in the mental stream. So all the data that we have learnt and experienced in this life are transmitted to the mental stream of the next life.

This is the reason why many children all over the world can remember their past existences correctly and why many prodigies can wonderfully remember and recite what they have learnt in the past existences. Moreover, the mental attitude, temperament, intelligence and interest in the future existence resemble those of the present existence.

If the brain is the mind, as a new brain is formed in the new existence and it is blank without any data at birth as

http://www.dhammadownload.com

pointed by **Descartes,** the great philosopher, the brain cannot remember past existences and past learning. Many prodigies can read and write without learning and some like Christian Heineken and Piṭakat Maung Tun Kyaing could recite the Bible or Piṭaka passages. The girl Ma Hla Gyi of Myanmar could read Pāḷi and understood the meaning at the age of six without learning Pāḷi at the present existence. Christian Heineken could recite passages from the Bible at the age of one year and could answer any question on geography at the age of two. These cannot be explained by the brain theory, but can be explained beautifully by Abhidhamma.

Furthermore, the ability to see spiritual beings and communicate with them by extrasensory perception (Mrs. Piper and Estelle Roberts), the ability to diagnose and heal patients who are hundreds of miles away (Edgar Cayce), the ability to make 'life readings' explaining the conditions of past existences as well as the present existence (Edgar Cayce), the Divine Eye that can see all living beings in the world as well as in the thirty-one planes of existence, the supernormal power of seeing beings who are passing away as well as beings who are reappearing in the thirty-one planes of existence *(Cutūpapāta-ñāṇa),* the supernormal power of knowing that living beings are born in various planes accoridng to their deeds *(yathākammūpaga-ñāṇa),* the supernormal knowledge of knowing future existences and future events *(anāgataṁsa-ñāṇa),* the ability to create various forms and to display various powers *(Iddhividha Abhiññā),* and so on, cannot be developed by the brain.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

Therefore, the mind is not the brain. The mind is a mental entity which is many billion times more superior than the brain, which is a material organ. The mind creates all human beings, all living beings, all nations, all kinds of literature and civilization, and the fate and fortune of all living beings. The mind is indeed the most powerful mental entity that can elevate man to the highest level. Those who do not understand what the mind really is should study Abhidhamma and undertake meditation.

4 Who is the Real Creator?

Do not take the trouble to find the real creator in the whole world or in all celestial planes. With his unique divine eye the Buddha could see in detail all living beings in one hundred thousand crore world systems as well as in the thirty-one planes of existence. He could penetrate up to the ultimate realities which constitute the ultimate components of mind and matter.

Even though he could see an infinitely wide field of vision in detail, he did not see any Almighty God or Omnipotent Being who could create the world with all its beings, neither could he see any 'soul' or 'jīva' or 'atta' or 'live entity' which is permanent and immortal and which keeps the body alive and active.

Therefore, an Almighty Being who could create the world and living beings does not exist, neither the 'soul' or 'jīva' or 'atta' or 'live entity' that is supposed to be created by him really exists. The only realities that really exist in the universe are just three kinds – consciousness, mental factors and matter including energy.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

Consciousness and mental factors are collectively called *'nāma'*, i.e., mental entities, and matter and energy are collectively called *'rūpa'*, i.e., material entities. So only *'nāma'* and *'rūpa'* exist in the whole universe.

The mental entities and material entities are not permanent; they arise and dissolve very rapidly and incessantly. Consequently all living beings and inanimate things are not permanent; they all are arising and dissolving rapidly and incessantly. So **'impermanence'** *(anicca)* is a common characteristic of all living beings and inanimate things. Science verifies this fact by its statement that electrons rotate rapidly around the nucleus of each atom and the valence electrons in the outer most shells are moving from one atom to another.

What is not permanent is not satisfactory and the state of being tortured incessantly by the dissolution or perishing of mental and material entities that we cherish as our body and mind really amounts to suffering. So **'suffering'** or 'unsatisfactoriness' *(dukkha)* is another common characteristic of all living beings.

Furthermore, if we can develop the right mental concentration, i.e.. the absorption state of the mind called *jhāna.* by undertaking tranquillity meditation, the mind becomes pure and very powerful, radiating very bright and penetrative light. With the help of this light, one can penetrate into one's body as well as others's bodies to oberve the ultimate realities arising and dissolving very rapidly and incessantly.

Since the ultimate realites – consciousness, mental factors, ultimate forms of matter and energy are formless

http://www.dhammadownload.com

and shapeless, one cannot observe anybody, person or living being with the concentrated mind-eye with the help of that bright, penetrative light. So, in reality, there is no person or self or soul or ego. This selfless or soulless characteristic of all living beings is called *'anatta'* or **'not-self'**.

These three common characteristics of all livings beings and inanimate things – viz., the characteristics of *impermanence, suffering* and *not-self,* are very important since they describe the real nature of all sense objects including all living beings and the universe. Since the mind is blinded by *ignorance (moha),* we cannot see the real world in which only formless and shapeless ultimate realities exist, arising, dissolving and interacting in various ways to produce very complicated psychophysical phenomena.

In this real world no living beings, no inanimate things, no persons and no souls exist; only consciousness, mental factors and ultimate material entities exist. Since living persons and souls do not exist, we don't need any creator to create these things. Because human beings are blinded by ignorance, they cannot see the ultimate realities. They see only concepts or mental constructs called *'paññatti'* which give the impression that living beings and inanimate things really exist. So they postulated that an Omnipotent Creator creates all these things.

The wrong vision of the illusive world gives rise to *'wrong belief' (diṭṭhi),* thinking that living beings and 'self' really exist. One basic wrong view which has plagued men for aeons is **'personality-belief'** *(sakkāya-diṭṭhi),* taking that 'I' or 'self' really exists. This wrong belief makes one very selfish, self-centred, and very greedy, striving for

http://www.dhammadownload.com

one's benefits at the expense of others. Based on this basic wrong belief many other wrong views arise in the world, creating uncountable proplems.

The most dreadful thing about 'personality-belief' is that it can couple with bad *kamma* (volitional action) to cast one into a woeful abode after death. According to the Buddha's teachings, to get rid of personality-belief is most important and most urgent. Thus to understand the true nature of sense objects and the three common characteristics of the ultimate realities, the fundamental building units of all living beings, is very important.

It is in fact most important to know clearly the nature and properties of the mind which is the greatest power known to man. We can see the mind shaping the fate and fortune of each individual and we can learn from the rational teachings of the Buddha that the mind will condition the future existence of each individual after death through the powerful property of the mind called *'kamma'* which is explained in the next chapter.

The mind is indeed the real creator. It is most interesting to learn how the mind creates all living beings in the world and in the thirty-one planes of existence through *'kamma'*. It is equally interesting to learn that all the teachings of the Buddha can be verified by one's own *'direct knowledge'* which is more accurate than science instruments.

If one can control only one thing, that is the mind, not to do evil and to do good, then one shall attain human happiness, celestial happiness and Nibbāna happiness.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

6

What Kamma Is

1 What is Kamma?

'Kamma' is a Pāḷi word, meaning *'action'* or *'deed'*. The Sanskrit equivalent of kamma is *'Karma'*.

Only *'volitional action'* is called kamma. An action without volition or intention is not kamma. The reason is that it is volition *(cetanā)* which accomplishes an action.

For example, if we unintentionally step on ants and they die, this does not give rise to kamma. If we intentionally step on the ants to kill them and they die, an unwholesome kamma is formed.

So we should regard kamma as *'volitional action'* or *'intentional deed'*.

Kamma is not 'luck', which implies that something happens without a cause. Kamma itself is a cause and it will produce its appropriate effect.

Nothing happens without a cause: One is lucky or not depending on the effects of the volitional actions one

http://www.dhammadownload.com

has done previously in the present existence or in past existences.

Only when one understands correctly the principle of *'kamma and its effect'*, shall one possess the right understanding and the right view. The right view is **"sammādiṭṭhi"**. The right view leads to the right thought, the right speech, the right action, the right livelihood and good morality.

Paying no attention to *'kamma and its effect'*, not understanding it and ignoring it will lead to the wrong understanding and the wrong view. The wrong view is **'micchādiṭṭhi'**. The wrong view gives rise to the wrong thought, the wrong speech, the wrong action, the wrong livelihood and bad character.

Thus a person who understands *'kamma and its effect'* and the one who does not understand it will be so different that they are wide apart like the earth and the sky.

The right view *'sammādiṭṭhi'* causes unarisen moral deeds to arise, multiplies the wholesome deeds that have already arisen, and will condition a blissful rebirth after death. The right view has no equal in conditioning blissful rebirth in blissful planes.

The wrong view *'miccādiṭṭhi'* causes unarisen immoral deeds to arise, multiplies the immoral deeds that have already arisen, and will condition a woeful rebirth after death. The wrong view has no equal in conditioning woeful rebirth in woeful planes.

The principle of kamma and its effect is an important principle in Buddhism. One shall

http://www.dhammadownload.com

become a true Buddhist only when one understands kamma and its effect, believes it and has the right view.

One ought to understand how kamma arises and how it operates so that one shall be ashamed and scared to perform immoral actions and willing and delighted to do wholesome deeds. One shall then become an upright person with good moral character and shall be able to create good fate and destiny for oneself.

2 How does Kamma Arise?

There are three ways of performing an *'action'* called *'kamma'*:

(1) by bodily action called *kāyakamma,*
(2) by verbal action calleed *vacīkamma,*
(3) by mental action called *manokamma.*

The body, the head, the hands and the lips cannot move by themselves; they are moved by the mind through mind-produced material groups *(cittaja rūpa)*. So it is the mind that really perform all three types of action – *bodily action, verbal action* and *mental action.*

How does the mind accomplish an action?

The mind is a combination of *consciousness (citta)* and mental factors *(cetasikas)*. Although *consciousness* is the leader of the group, it is just the awareness of sense objects. It is the mental factors that influence the mind to perform a moral or immoral action.

The three major mental factors that influence the mind

http://www.dhammadownload.com

to perform immoral actions are *greed (lobha)*, *anger (dosa)* and *ignorance (moha)*. They are known as *'immoral roots'*, that is, they are the root causes of all immoral actions.

Greed *'lobha'* has the characteristic of *'craving'* or *'attachment'*. It will never abandon this characteristic. After getting something one craves for, it will crave for another thing. The more one gets, the more it will crave for. All the wealth on earth cannot satisfy the craving of *greed (lobha)*.

Because one craves for others's properties, one commits lying, stealing, cheating, robbing and even killing. On account of its nature of craving for sensual pleasure endlessly without limit it is known as *'taṇhā'*. Because it defiles and burns the mind by its uncontrollable desire for sense objects and attachment to them, it is known as *'rāga'*. When *rāga* overwhelms the mind like an ogre, it motivates the mind to commit rape, adultery and murder.

It is surprising how *greed* can influence the mind very subtly to perform actions to gratify its desire. A well-known chief monk, **Taung Myo Sayadaw,** wrote: *"The world which is the human abode is ruled by greed."*

Anger *(dosa)* has the characteristic of harshness, hatred, illwill or aversion. It is the most destructive element in the world according to the teachings of the Buddha. Inflated anger makes one angry, furious, harsh and cruel. It influences the mind to hate, harm, torture or kill others. One may kill cruelly even one's employer or benefactor because one gets angry with him or because one wants to get his money.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

Depressed anger causes sadness, sorrow, grief, lamentation, disappointment, depression, despair, etc., to arise. Mental tension, caused by stress and strain, is also the result of anger and it can give rise to various kinds of ailment. Whenever anger arises in the mind, it is accompanied by mental suffering.

Ignorance *(moha)* deludes and blinds the mind so that it cannot differentiate between right or wrong, good or bad. It makes us ignorant of the true nature of sense objects. We do not know that all living beings and inanimate things are made up of mental entities *(nāma)* and material entities *(rūpa)* which are arising and dissolving very rapidly and incessantly. So they have the common characteristics of *impermanence (anicca), suffering (dukkha)* and *not-self (anatta).*

They also have the characteristic of *foulness* or repulsiveness *(asubha).* Because we are blinded by ignorance, we may think that a person is very beautiful or handsome and attractive. The Buddha advises to look at that person analytically, that is, to divide that person into head-hair, body-hair, nails teeth, skin, flesh, blood, bones, intestines, urine, faeces, etc., and examine each part closely. Every body part is disgusting and repulsive.

As we are blinded by *ignorance* not to know the true nature of sense objects, we think that sense objects are *permanent (nicca),* pleasant and *blissful (sukha),* self or *person (atta)* and *beautiful (subha).* Therefore we crave for these sense objects with *greed (lobha).* We also develop the *wrong view (diṭṭhi),* thinking that 'I' really exist. Consequently we become selfish and self centered with

http://www.dhammadownload.com

little consideration and sympathy for others.

Greed, anger and *ignorance* are the most dreadful *defilements (kilesās)* that defile, debase and burn the mind. They are the root causes of all evil actions, unjust and cruel actions in the world. They are also the main causes of all suffering. We shall be most happy if we can eliminate them from the mind.

A practical way to suppress the evil roots not to arise in the mind is to develop their opposites known as *'moral roots'*. These are *greedlessness (alobha), hatelessness (adosa)* and *wisdom (amoha).*

Greedlessness (alobha) is the direct opposite of *greed (lobha).* It has the characteristic of *'non-craving'* or *'non-attachment'*. It does not crave for others' properties and it is not attached to one's properties. So one can give away one's money or porperty in donation. One can sacrifice self-interest and help others. One can generously give away one's time and money for the welfare of others. Giving alms means suppressing *greed* and developing *greedlessness,* which is a very beautiful, positive quality in human beings.

Hatelessness (adosa) is the direct opposite of *anger (dosa).* Its characteristic is harshlessness, mildness, non-hatred, non-aversion, non-cruelty, forgiveness and loving-kindness. It makes one not to be angry even when one is insulted or harmed by others and ready to forgive them for their wrong actions. *Forgiveness* is a very beautiful, positive quality as the saying goes: *"Forgiveness is divine".* *Loving-kindness* is also a very beautiful, positive quality, wishing all living beings to be happy and free from danger.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

It really makes one beautiful. To develop *hatelessness* or loving-kindness we observe moral precepts and radiate loving-kindness.

Wisdom (amoha or *paññā)* is the direct opposite of *ignorance (moha).* It can differentiate between right and wrong, good and evil. It penetratively understands the true nature of sense objects – viz., *impermanence, suffering, not-self* and *repulsiveness.* It can drive away the darkness or blindness caused by *ignorance.* So it is also known as *vijjā* (wisdom) whereas *ignorance* is called avijjā.

Wisdom is the most powerful mental power. To develop it we must acquire worldly knowledge as well as supramundane knowledge by listening to the Dhamma, studying the Dhamma, discussing the Dhamma with learned persons, and undertaking meditation. When we can develop the highest wisdom called Fourfold Path-wisdom by insight meditation, we can eradicate all defilements from our minds and can ennjoy the unique bliss of eternal peace and happiness *(Nibbāna)* right away.

So mental factors are very powerful. They can subtly influence the mind to perform various actions. Unwholesome, immoral mental factors debase the mind and influence the mind to be wicked and to perform various evil actions. On the other hand wholesome and beautiful mental factors enoble the mind and influence the mind to perform various wholesome actions.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

How do Kammas Arise from the Actions of the Mind?

Suppose a mosquito bites your forehead. The mind knows it is painful; therefore *anger* arises. Whenever *anger* or *greed* arises, *ignornace* also arises. *Ignorance* takes that 'I' and 'mosquito' really exist and that the mosquito bites me painfully. So anger-rooted consciousness or unwholesome minds arise. You become angry and *anger* influences the mind to kill the mosquito. *Anger* makes its concomitants (consciousness and mental factors) become harsh and cruel, but it cannot perform the killing action. It is the *volition (cetanā)* that performs the killing action.

Volition (cetanā) is a neutral mental factor which associates with every consciousness or mind. It becomes evil on account of the influence of *anger*. To accomplish the demand of *anger, volition* sets the intention to kill the mosquito, it acts on and prompts its concomitants to perform their respective functions to accomplish the killing action. Consequently the consciousness produces material groups which move the hand to smash the mosquito. The mosquito dies.

Who kills the mosquito?

Since the hand smashes the mosquito, is the hand the killer? The hand will say: "I am just matter. I cannot move by myself. The mind moved me to smash the mosquito. I do not know what was being done." So the hand is not the real culprit.

Then is the *consciousness (citta)* which moved the hand the killer? The *consciousness* will also make the ar-

http://www.dhammadownload.com

gument: "I am just aware of the senses. I know the mosquito bites the forehead and it is painful. I have no intention to kill the mosquito. Since *volition* prompted me to move the hand, I just moved the hand." So we can see that *consciousness* in only an accomplice, not the real killer.

Who is the real killer then? It is the *volition* since it set the intention to kill the mosquito and acted on and prompted *consciousness* and other mental factors to perform their respective functions to accomplish the killing.

Since *volition* is responsible for organizing the action and accomplishing the action, it is identified with the action and called *'kamma'* by the Buddha.

"Cetanā-haṁ bhikkhave kammaṁ vadāmi."

"O monks, it is volition that I call kamma.

"Cetayittvā kammaṁ karoti kāyena vācāya manasā."

"Prompted by volition one performs an action through body, speech or mind."

The Simile of the Elephant King Saddan

Whenever I gave the lecture on *"Kamma, the Real Creator"*, I used to tell the story of the elephant king, **Saddan,** as an illustration.

The elephant king Saddan, the *Bodhisatta* of Gotama Buddha, lived in a spacious plain surrounded by hills in the Himalayas. He had two elephant queens, named **Mahā Subhaddā** and **Cūḷa Subhaddā**, and seven thousand attendants. All were white elephants. At the time when sal trees were in full bloom, Saddan led his two queens under a sal tree and shook the branches of the tree with his trunk

http://www.dhammadownload.com

with the intention of raining down sal flowers on their backs.

Many flowers dropped on the back of Mahā Subhaddā, but a packet of red ants fell on the back of Cūḷa Subhaddā. The latter made an unwise reflection: "This elephant king loves his chief queen more than he loves me. He drops flowers on her back, but he drops red ants on my back. He doesn't love me really. He hates me and puts me to shame. Why should I love him ? I hate him and I shall break his heart."

Wrong reflection could be very terrible. It could immediately turn a lover into an enemy. The love which sprang out of attachment by greed could easily be turned to hatred just because of a trifle, undersirable event. We have a saying in Myanmar: *"Big love can burst into big hatred."*

When hatred arises, anger-rooted consciousness arises accompanied by *ignorance (moha). Ignorance* blinds the mind so that one cannot make wise reflection. With the intention of killing the elephant king, Cuḷa Subhaddā plucked some sal flowers and offered them to a Pacceka Buddha, making a wish: "On account of the good merit I have done now, may I be reborn as a very beautiful girl in my next existence. May I become a chief queen and may I wear ear-rings made from the tusk of the elephant king, Saddan."

As she had developed hatred towards her husband, Cūḷa Subhaddā was no longer happy. She wanted to die soon, to become a human queen and to kill the elephant king. She could not sleep and she could not eat. Soon she died. She was reborn as a very beautiful girl. When she

http://www.dhammadownload.com

came of age, the king of Bārānasī saw her and made her his chief queen.

She could remember her past existence and she was being burnt with anger to kill the elephant king, Saddan. So with a plan to kill Saddan, she lay in bed without taking food and drinks.

As the King of Bārānasī loved his new young and beautiful chief queen with all his heart, he was very worried about her condition. So he asked her, "Dear queen, what do you want? Tell me whatever you want under the sun. I shall get it for you."

Having received the promise of the king, the queen said, "I want to wear the ear-rings made from the tusk of the white elephant King Saddan who lives in the Himalayas. If I cannot wear those ear-rings, I will surely die."

The King summoned all the well-known hunters in his kingdom and entrusted the task to kill the elephant king and get his tusk to the well-built, skilful hunter **Sonuttara.** The chief queen gave him directions how to go to the dwelling place of King Saddan. She also gave him a pair of robes and advised him to wear the robes in case of danger as King Saddan revered monks very much.

Sonuttara went to the Himalayas as directed by the queen. When he reached the dwelling place of King Saddan, he studied the movement of the elephant king. The king took a bath daily in a lake and stood under a banyan tree. The hunter dug a tunnel and made a hole at the place where the elephant king stood. Water drops dripping from the body and the navel of the elephant king fell through the hole.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

Without any delay the great hunter shot the elephant with a poisoned arrow. The arrow went through the navel into the body of the elephant king with great force. As it was very painful, Saddan made a loud cry. His chief queen and attendants came flying through the air.

"An enemy shot me. Find the enemy," said the elephant king. All the elephants flew out in search of the enemy.

When he was left alone, Saddan pondered: "The arrow went through my navel. The enemy must be under me." So he scratched out the earth under him. When the hunter was exposed, the elephant king tried to snatch him with his trunk.

The hunter evaded and quickly put the robes in the trunk. On seeing the robes, Saddan's anger disappeared. He gently brought the hunter up and said, "O friend, I am not your enemy. Why did you shoot me so cruelly?"

"O elephant king, the chief queen of the king of Bārānasī, Cūḷa Subhaddā, wanted your tusk to make earings. The king ordered me to kill you and get your tusk. To obey the order of the king, I had to shoot you with a poisoned arrow. So three persons are involved in this act of shooting. If you kill me, I alone have to die. If you take pity on me I shall live," said the hunter.

Saddan thought of the days when he was together with his two queens. He came to know that Cūḷa Subhaddā misunderstood his love towards her and she bore him a grudge. She wanted to kill him and use his tusk to make ear-rings.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

Saddan allowed the hunter to cut his tusk. The hunter exerted great strength to cut the tusk with a saw. But the tusk was so hard that he could hardly make a dent on it. So daddan took the saw with his trunk and cut his tusk himself. He gave the tusk to the hunter and let him go.

When the hunter gave the tusk to the king, the king gladly handed it over to the chief queen. She placed the white, smooth tusk on her chest, embracing it with both hands. When she heard the whole story from the hunter that king Saddan himself cut the tusk and willingly gave it to her, she realized her mistake. She remembered the days when she was enjoying the time together with King Saddan.

"I was wrong. King Saddan didn't hate me. He did love me dearly. He even cut his tusk and gave it to me."

On thinking over and over how King Saddan had cared for her and loved her and how she had killed him cruelly, great despair arose in her and the hot fire of anger scorched her to death.

In this story three persons were involved in killing the elephant King Saddan. Who was the killer?

The hunter shot the elephant because he was ordered by the king to do so. The king, in turn, had to give the order because his beloved chief queen prompted him to do so. The hunter resembled the hand that killed the mosquito; the king resembled the consciousness that moved the hand to kill the mosquito; the chief queen resembled the volition that set the intention to kill the mosquito and prompted its concomitants to accomplish the killing.

Since the chief queen had the motive to kill King Saddan and prompted the King and the hunter to kill Saddan,

http://www.dhammadownload.com

she was the original, real killer, the main culprit. Similarly, in killing the mosquito, volition is the real killer and the main culprit.

4 Two Types of Kamma – Conascent Kamma and Asynchronous Kamma

Conascent kammas accomplish an action and the action will bring its due results.

As stated in Abhidhamma Commentary the minds can arise and dissolve one after another more than a trillion per snap of the fingers or per wink. So many billions of minds arise and dissolve during the action of killing a mosquito. About half of these minds are anger-rooted minds or unwholesome minds.

The volitions associated with these unwholesome minds perform the killing action. They are known as **'conascent kammas'** *(sahajāta kammas)*. 'Conascent' means 'arising together', that is, the volition and the consciousness arise together.

The minds (consciousness and mental factors) dissolve soon after they have arisen. But they leave their properties in the mental stream before they dissolve. These properties are conveyed from one mind to another. So they are said to be in the mental stream.

The volitional properties or kamma properties that are in the mental stream are known as **'asynchronous kammas'** *(nānakkhaṇika kammas)*, meaning that the time they are formed and the time they bear results are different.

So two kinds of kammas are formed in every voli-

http://www.dhammadownload.com

tional action. Both types of kammas will bear their appropriate results. Asynchronous kammas are like seeds left behind after the ripe fruits disintegrate. As a seed can produce a new plant, so also an asynchronous kamma can also give rise to a new existence.

In killing a fish, a hen or a man billions of anger- rooted minds arise and dissolve. The volitions associated with these minds are called conascent kammas. When these volitions dissolve, they leave their kamma properties in the mental stream. These billions of kamma properties are called asynchronous kammas.

Similarly in stealing or cheating or robbing other's property billions of greed-rooted minds arise and dissolve. So billions of conascent kammas and billions of asynchronous kammas will be formed.

On the other hand when one performs a wholesome deed such as giving alms or paying obeisance to the Buddha or undertaking meditation, billions of wholesome minds will arise and dissolve. So billions of conascent kammas and billions of asynchronous kammas will be formed again.

The volitions associated with unwholesome minds such as anger-rooted minds or greed-rooted minds are called **unwholesome conascent kammas** or **unwholesome kammas.** The kamma properties left behind in the mental stream when these volitions dissolve are called **unwholesome asynchronous kammas** or **unwholesome kammas.**

Similarly the volitioins associated with sense-sphere wholesome minds are called **sense-sphere wholesome conascent kammas** or **sense-sphere wholesome**

http://www.dhammadownload.com

kammas. The kamma properties left behind in the mental stream when these volitions dissolve are called **sense-sphere wholesome asynchronous kammas** or **sense-sphere wholesome kammas.**

In tranquillity meditation when one can develop jhāna attainment (meditative absorption), fine material- sphere wholesome minds arise by billions. The volitions associated with these minds are called **fine material-sphere wholesome conascent kammas.** The kamma properties left behind in the mental stream when these volitions dissolve are called **fine material-sphere wholesome asynchronous kammas.**

Similarly when one can develop immaterial-sphere wholesome jhāna attainment, billions of **immaterial-sphere wholesome conasent kammas** and billions of **immaterial-sphere wholesome asynchronous kammas** will be formed.

5 Three Types of Kamma Doors

The place where kamma arises or by means of which kamma arises is called 'Kamma Door' *(kamma-dvāra).*

1 *Kāyadvāra – Body door*

It is special bodily movement called *kāyaviññatti* where bodily action occurs or by means of which bodily action arises.

2 *Vacidvāra – Mouth door*

It is speech-producing movement of the mouth called *vacīviññatti* by means of which verbal action arises.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

3 *Manodvāra – Mind door*

It refers to all consciousnesses where mental actions occur or by means of which mental actions arise.

Three Types of Kammas according to Kamma Doors

1 *Kāyakamma – Bodily action*

It is generally performed by special bodily movement or bodily intimation *(kāyaviññatti)*.

2 *Vacīkamma – Verbal action*

It is generally performed by verbal intimation *(Vacīviññatti)*.

3 *Manokamma – Mental action*

It is performed in the mind and by the mind called *manodvāra* through thinking, plotting, meditating, etc.

6 Ten Kinds of Unwholesome Actions *(Akusalakammapatha)*

'Akusalakammapatha' means unwholesome course of action. There are ten unwholesome courses of action: three are bodily, four are verbal, and three are mental. Each course of action is identified with the volition initating an effort to accomplish the respective action.

Such volition is an unwholesome kamma regardless of whether or not it completes the action. If it does reach completion of the action and achieves its aim, then it becomes a full course of action. The characteristic of a full course of action is that the kamma so produced has the potency to take on the rebirth generating role, that is, the

http://www.dhammadownload.com

role of the productive kamma *(janaka-kamma).*

(a) Three Unwholesome Bodily Actions

1 *Pānātipātā* – killing any sentient being;
2 *Adinnādānā* – stealing or taking other's property unlawfully;
3 *Kāmesumicchācārā* – sexual misconduct and misuse of the senses.

(b) Four Unwholesome Verbal Actions

4 *Musāvādā* – lying or speaking falsely;
5 *Pisuṇavācā* – slandering;
6 *Pharusavācā* – rude or harsh speech;
7 *Samphappalāpā* – vain or frivolous talk.

(c) Three Unwholesome Mental Actions

8 *Abhijjhā* – covetousness; the wish and the plot to acquire another person's property unlawfully;
9 *Vyāpāda* – ill-will or the wish to cause harm to other beings;
10 *Micchādiṭṭhi* – wrong view, taking kamma and its effect do not exist.

Conditions for Completing an Action

1 The following five conditions are necessary to complete the evil action of killing: (i) a living being, (ii) knowledge that it is a living being, (iii) intention to kill, (iv) effort to kill, and (v) death of the being.

The gravity of the evil depends on the virtue and the magnitude of the being killed. The killing of a virtuous person or a big animal is regarded as more heinous than

http://www.dhammadownload.com

the killing of a wicked person or a small animal.

The evil effects of killing are: brevity of life, ill-health, constant grief due to the seperation from the loved, constant fear, and rebirth in woeful abodes.

2 Five conditions are necessary for the completion of the evil action of stealing: (i) another's property, (ii) knowledge that is anothers's property, (iii) intention to steal, (iv) effort to steal, (v) getting other's property.

The evil effects of stealing are: poverty, misery, disappointment, dependent livelihood, and woeful rebirth.

The gravity of the evil depends on the value of the property stolen and the virtue of the possessor. If someone steals the money donated to the Buddha or the Buddha's Dispensation, the evil is very grave.

3 Four conditions are necessary to complete the evil action of sexual misconduct: (i) a woman or man not married to oneself, (ii) the thought to enjoy, (iii) the effort to enjoy, and (iv) gratification.

The evil effects of sexual misconduct are: (i) having many ememies, (ii) no prosperity, (iii) no happiness, (iv) union with undesirabe wife or husband, (v) birth as a eunuch or as a woman, and (v) birth in woeful abodes.

4 Four conditions are necessary to complete the evil of lying: (i) an untruth, (ii) intention to deceive, (iii) utterance of falsehood, and (iv) actual deception.

The evil effects of lying are: (i) unclear speech, (ii) unevenness of teeth, (iii) stinking mouth, (iv) dryness of body skin, (v) lack of grace, (vi) deformed appearance, (vii) untrustworthiness, and (viii) woeful rebirth.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

5 Four conditions are necessary to complete the evil of slanderging: (i) persons to be divided, (ii) intention to separate them, (iii) corresponding effort and (iv) misunderstanding resulting in separation.

The inevitable consequences of slandering is the dissolution of friendship without any sufficient cause and woeful rebirth.

6 Three conditions are necessary to complete the evil action of harsh speech: (i) a person to be abused, (ii) angry thought, and (iii) the actual abuse.

The inevitable consequences of harsh speech are ugly appearance, harsh voice, having many enemies, being detested by others though innocent, and woeful rebirth.

7 Two conditions are necessary to complete the evil action of frivolous talk: (i) the inclination towards frivolous talk, (ii) its narration.

The inevitable consequences of frivolous talk are defective bodily organs, incredible speech, and woeful rebirth.

8 Three conditions are necessary to complete the evil action of covetousness: (i) another's possession, (ii) desire to possess it, and (iii) plotting to possess it.

The inevitable consequences of covetousness are nonfulfillment of one's wishes and woeful rebirth.

9 Three conditions are necessary to complete the evil action of illwill: (i) another person, (ii) intention to do harm, and (iii) plotting to do harm.

The inevitable consequences of illwill are ugliness, manifold diseases, detestable nature and woeful rebirth.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

10 Three conditions are necessary to complete the evil action of wrong view: (i) ignorance of kamma and its result, (ii) perverted manner in which the object is viewed, and (iii) understanding it according to that misconception.

The inevitable consequences of false view are base desires, lack of wisdom, dull wit, chronic diseases, blameworthy ideas, multiplication of evil deeds and woeful rebirth.

7 Ten Kinds of Wholesome Actions

(Kusalakammapatha)

There are ten wholesome courses of action – three are bodily, four are verbal, and three are mental. Each course of action is identified with the volition initiating an effort to accomplish the respective action. Such volition is a wholesome kamma regardless of whether or not it completes the action. If it does reach completion of the action and achieves its aim of avoiding the unwholesome action, then it becomes a full course of action, that is, a productive kamma *(janaka kamma)* with the potency to generate a new existence.

(a) Three Wholesome Bodily Actions

1 *Pānātipātā-virati* – avoidance of killing,
2 *Adinnādānā-virati* – avoidance of stealing,
3 *Kāmesumicchācārā-virati* – avoidance of sexual misconduct.

(b) Four Unwholesome Verbal Actions

4 *Musāvādā-virati* – avoidance of lying,
5 *Pisuṇavācā-virati* – avoidance of slandering,

http://www.dhammadownload.com

6 *Pharusavācā-virati* – avoidance of harsh speech,
7 *Samphappalāpā-virati* – avoidance of vain talk.

(c) Three Wholesome Mental Actions

8 *Abhijjhā* – absence of covetousness,
9 *Avyāpāda* – goodwill or absence of illwill to cause harm to other beings,
10 *Sammādiṭṭhi* – right view that believes in kamma and its result.

It should be noted that the ten unwholesome actions are also called **"ten ducaritas"**, meaning *"ten types* of *evil conduct"* whereas the ten wholesome actions are designated as **"ten sucaritas"**, meaning *"ten types of good conduct."*

It is very important to know what is bad or unwholesome and what is good or wholesome from the point of view kamma and its result. Unwholesome actions are performed by unwholesome minds giving rise to billions of unwholesome kammas bearing a billionfold of bad results. On the other hand, wholesome actions are performed by wholesome minds giving rise to billions of wholesome kammas bearing a billionfold of good results.

Thus one should be willing and diligent to avoid ten unwholesome actions and thereby to accomplish the ten wholesome actions simultaneously. Besides by doing so, he purifies his mind by suppressing immoral roots from arising. Thus he can live in accord with the advice of all the Buddhas: *"To abstain from all evil, to do good and to purify the mind."*

One can achieve this goal by just observing the five

http://www.dhammadownload.com

moral precepts of **Pañca Sīla** vigilantly. Thus *Pañca Sīla* is very important, and in keeping *Pañca Sīla* we should be careful to avoid all the ten unwholesome actions.

8 Ten Bases of Meritorious Deeds

(Puññakriya Vatthu)

"Puññakriya Vatthu" means *"ten bases of meritorious actions which should be performed because they produce great benefits."*

1	*Dāna*	– alms-giving or generosity,
2	*Sīla*	– morality or observing five precepts, eight precepts, ten precepts, etc.,
3	*Bhāvanā*	– tranquillity meditation and insight meditation,
4	*Apacāyana*	– reverence to elders and holy persons,
5	*Veyāvacca*	– service in wholesome deeds,
6	*Pattidāna*	– sharing of merit,
7	*Pattānumodana*	– rejoicing in other's merit,
8	*Dhammassavana*	– listening to the dhamma,
9	*Dhammadesanā*	– teaching or expounding the dhamma,
10	*Diṭṭhijjukamma*	– Straightening out one's view or taking the right view.

The above ten bases of meritorious actions can be condensed into three groups:-

1 Dāna group – *dāna, paṭṭidāna, pattānumodana*;
2 Sīla group – *Sīla, appacāyana, veyāvacca,*

http://www.dhammadownload.com

3 Bhāvanā group – bhāvanā, dhammassavana, dhammadesanā, diṭṭhijjukamma.

The above meritorious actions are generally performed with sense-sphere wholesome minds unless one attains *jhāna* and *magga* in meditation. So they generally give rise to sense-sphere wholesome kammas.

One should perform all these meritorious deeds as much as possible to accumulate wholesome kammas and to purify the mind.

9 Where do Kammas Exist?

In **Milinda Paññhā** the learned King, **Milanda,** asked the learned Arahant, **Venerable Nāgasena**, "Venerable sir, you talk about wholesome kammas and unwholesome kammas. Where do these kammas exist?"

"Your Majesty, they exist in the mental and physical stream. They are invisible and cannot be shown to you, but they can be explained with examples."

"Explain it to me, venerable sir."

"When a mango plant is produced from a mango seed, the genetic property to bear mango fruits is transmitted from the seed to the little plant. The property remains in the plant all the time when the plant grows to a big tree. But that property is invisible and cannot be shown. But when the mango tree bears fruits, we can definitely say that the property to bear fruits exist in the tree. In the same way, though kammas are invisible and cannot be shown, we can see various existences produced by kammas. So we can say that kammas exist in the mental and physical stream."

http://www.dhammadownload.com

"It is reasonable, venerable sir."

The question asked by King Milinda arose again in the twentieth century. It was **Dr. B.R. Ambedkar,** the Judicial Minister of India at the time, who asked the same question to **Venerable Ariya Dhamma** (B.A). who resided in Buddha Vihāra, Bombay. Ven. Ariya Dhamma was an intelligent person who had studied under the learned chief monk. **Venerable Ukkaṭha** of Taung Dwin Gyi, Myanmar.

Dr. Ambedkar was the leader of low-caste people. About twenty million persons of the low-caste group wanted to become Buddhists as there is no caste differentiation in Buddhism including kamma and its effect. So Dr. Ambedkar asked the following question to Ven. Ariya Dhamma.

"Venerable sir, there is the principle of kamma and its result in Buddhism. Where does this kamma exist?"

"I want to answer your question by asking you some questions. How many academic degrees have you received?"

"B.A., M.A., Ph.D., Doctorate of Science, and Law degree , altogether five degrees, venerable sir."

"How long had you to study to attain these degrees?"

"Thirty years, sir."

"Do the qualifications of these degrees exist in you?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then show me the qualification of the doctorate of science."

"I cannot show you the qualification in me. But I can show you the certificate of the Doctorate of Science that I received."

http://www.dhammadownload.com

"Well, the certificate is just some printed letters on paper. Does your qualification exist in you or on paper?"

"It exists in me, sir."

"Where does it exist – in your mouth or in your chest or in your heart?"

"I cannot say where it exists. If you ask questions on this subject. I can answer the questions. I can also make use of this qualification in my daily work."

"You are right. I believe that the qualifications of the academic degrees you received exist in you. But you cannot show them to me. Similarly kammas exist in our mental streams, but they cannot be shown to people. By considering the various results produced by kammas we have to believe that kammas exist in us.

"It is reasonable, sir. Let me ask another question."

10 How do Kammas Condition new Existences to Arise?

"When a person dies, how do kammas produce his new existence? Hinduism explains reincarnation very simply. The life entity called *jiva atta* goes out of this body when this body dies and enters a new body, producing a new existence. For example, a bird resting on a tree will fly to another tree when the first tree is cut down and rests on the second tree."

"Dear Minister, the Buddha understood clearly with his divine eye and Buddha's knowledge that no permanent immortal soul or ego or *jīva atta* really exists. The principle how invisible kamma conditions a new existence to arise is very deep and subtle. It cannot be explained sim-

http://www.dhammadownload.com

ply like a bird flying from one tree to another. If you want to understand, let your men bring a full-length mirror."

"A full-length mirror is here now, sir."

"You please stand in front of the mirror. Now as soon as you stand in front of the mirror, a man appears in the mirror. Is the man in the mirror you or another person?"

"It cannot be another person. It must be I."

"But you and the man in the mirror are facing opposite directions. If you are the same persons, why do you face different directions?

"Let me amend my answer. The man in the mirror is not I, but my image."

"All right. Do you have a photograph? Is the photograph your image also?"

"Yes, venerable sir."

"Place the photograph in front of the mirror. Now please raise your hands. Put down your hands. Please sit down. Please stand up. Now the man in the mirror performed identical actions as you had done, but your image, the photograph, didn't do anything. Do you still want to refute that the man in the mirror is not you? Should I ask another person?"

"You need not ask another person. The man in the mirror is I".

"Well then, break this mirror with a hammer."

Dr. Ambedkar's men broke the mirror.

"Now as soon as the mirror broke the man in the mirror disappeared. If you and the man in the mirror are the same, why don't you disappear? Do you like to say that the man in the mirror is not you?"

http://www.dhammadownload.com

"I do not know how to answer. You please answer the question".

"Well then, we should say that the man in the mirror is neither you nor not you. Nothing is transmitted from you to the man in the mirror. So we cannot say the man is you. But without you the man cannot appear in the mirror. On account of you a man identical to you appears in the mirror. Since the man is related to you by cause and effect, we cannot also say that the man is not you.

"Similarly when a person dies and one of his kammas conditions a new human existence, no mental and material entities are transmitted to the new existence. All the mental and material entities of the former existence dissolve and perish in the former existence. But a kamma developed in the former existence conditions the new existence to arise by causal relations described by the Buddha in the Doctrine of Dependent Arising. *Paṭiccasamuppāda.*

"To give an easy explanation, let us suppose an unwholesome kamma has the chance to form a new existence. Then that kamma produces its resultant consciousness, associated mental factors and kamma-born materiality in the new existence. The kamma will keep on producing these results so long as it has kamma energy, keeping the new existence alive. The first resultant consciousness in the new existence is called *'rebirth consciousness.'* Subsequent resultant consciousnesses are called *'life-continuum'* that keeps the new existence alive. The last resultant consciousness is called *'death consciousness'* because the new existence terminates when this consciousness dissolves.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

"Unwholesome kamma produces unwholesome resultant consciousness, associated mental factors and kamma-born materiality which constitute a new existence in a woeful abode. If a sense-sphere wholesome kamma has the chance to bear results at death, it will produce wholesome resultant consciousness, associated mental factors and kamma-born materiality which constitute a new existence in the human abode or a celestial abode. If a fine-material sphere wholesome kamma has the chance to bear results, a fine-material sphere brahmā will be born.

"So Buddhism describes in detail how various kinds of existences are produced by various kammas. A permanent immortal soul has no role to play in going from one existence to another.

"Thus as no mental and material entities are transmitted from the old existence to the new existence, we cannot say that the new person is the former person. However, as the mental stream and the physical stream of the old existence flow on to the new existence, we cannot also say that the new person is not the former person.

"Even in the present existence the kamma that gave birth to this existence keeps on producing its resultant consciousness, associated mental factors and kamma-born materiality one after another. So old mental and physical entities are perishing and new mental and physical entities are being formed. Though mental and physical entities are changing all the time, we regard the whole existence as a single person because the mental entities and the physical entities are linked together in a continuous chain.

"Since the mental and physical stream flows on from

http://www.dhammadownload.com

the former existence to the new existence, we should regard the new person as the old person by conventional truth *(samuti-sacca)*. Is it clear to you?"

"It is very clear and very rational. Thank you very much, venerable sir."

Over twenty million Indian low-caste people led by Dr.B.R. Ambedkar became Buddhists. It is very delightful to hear this good news.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

7

How Do Kammas Bear Results?

1 The Habit of Looking at Immediate Results

People usually have the habit of looking at immediate results. If there is immediate benefit, they like to do it even if it is an unwholesome deed. If there is no immediate benefit, they do not like to do it even if it is a wholesome deed.

This is actually a short-sighted selfish outlook. With this outlook if one performs only immoral actions but no moral actions, one shall contribute nothing to the welfare of the people as well as to the welfare of oneself in the long run. One may even upset the happy and peaceful community and world peace.

As the Buddha advised his son Rāhulā in **Ambalaṭṭhika Rāhulovāda Sutta,** only if we are careful to do blameless and faultless actions, can we contribute something to the welfare of the community as well as to the welfare of ourselves. By doing so we can also give support to the noble endeavour to build a happy and peaceful world.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

"My son Rāhulā, what benefit has a mirror?" asked the Buddha.

"It has the benefit for looking at oneself."

"Yes, by looking into the mirror, one can see whether there is fault on one's face or not. In the same way when you want to do, to speak or to think about something, you look and consider first: 'Will this action, this speech or this thought do harm to me or to others? If it will do harm to anyone, that action, that speech or that thought has fault; it is immoral and unwholesome. Don't do it.

"If that action, that speech or that thought will cause no harm to anybody, either to oneself or to others, then it is faultless, moral and wholesome. You can do it. While you are doing it and when you have done it look and consider again in the same way. If it causes harm and suffering to someone, it is guilty and immoral. Stop it and don't do it again. If it causes no harm to anyone, it is faultless and wholesome. You can do it again and again."

This is a very sound and excellent advice. If everyone abides by this advice, all beings can live happily together and world peace will be established instantly.

2 Two Types of Results in Every Action

The faulty, unwholesome and immoral actions are **ten kinds of evil conduct** *(ducaritas)*. They consist of three unwholesome bodily actions – viz., killing, stealing, and sexual misconduct; four unwholesome verbal actions – viz., lying, slandering, harsh speech and vain talk; and three unwholesome mental actions – viz., planning to take other's pro-perty unlawfully, planning to destroy other's life and

http://www.dhammadownload.com

property, and wrong view ignoring kamma and its resuslt.

These immoral actions are performed with immoral minds and billions of immoral minds arise and perish during an evil action. The volitions associated with these immoral minds are known as **unwholesome conascent kammas.** Because of these kammas an evil action is accomplished and this evil action will give rise to its bad results.

Again when the above immoral minds and their associated volitions dissolve, the volitions leave behind their kamma properties in the mental stream. These kamma properties are known as **unwholesome asynchronous kammas.** These kammas will be transmitted from mind to mind and they will remain in the mental stream for life. Moreover, at death they are transmitted to the mental stream of the new existence. Thus they will be conveyed in the mental stream life after life, bearing their results whenever they have the chance.

Thus when one performs an unwholesome action, one shall get two types of results – the evil results of unwholesome conascent kammas and the terrible results of unwholesome asynchronous kammas.

The faultless, wholesome and moral actions are **ten kinds of good conduct** *(sucaritas).* We can accomplish these moral actions by avoiding the ten kinds of immoral evil actions.

For example, if we avoid killing the mosquito which bites us and let it go with the good intention of letting it live happily, billions of sense sphere wholesome minds arise during the action. The volitions which associate with these

http://www.dhammadownload.com

wholesome minds are known as **wholesome conascent kammas.** Because of these kammas the moral action of letting the mosquito go to a safe place is accomplished and this wholesome action will bear its good results such as letting the mosquito live happily with its beloved ones.

Again when the above moral minds and their associated volitions dissolve, the volitions leave behind their kamma properties in the mental stream. These kamma properties are known as **wholesome asynchronous kammas.** These kammas will be conveyed in the mental stream of this existences as well as in the mental streams of subsequent existences, bearing good results whenever they have the opportunity.

The immediate results of conascent kammas are evident in the present life. For example, if a man kills another person, that person has to die miserably with great fear, and his wife and family will be stricken with great sorrow and lamentation. They will have to live in poverty for life. The murderer may run away and may have to live in fear of being caught. He will be caught at last, tried in court and sentenced to death or life imprisonment.

Meritorious deeds include alms-giving *(dāna)*, observing morlaity *(sīla)* and undertaking meditation *(bhāvanā)* in addition to the ten types of good conduct. If one offers a spoonful of food to a monk, billions of moral minds arise during the offering and simultaneously billions of wholesome conascent kammas and billions of wholesome asynchronous kammas are formed.

As the results of conascent kammas of offering food to the monk, the monk can partake of food delightfully. As

http://www.dhammadownload.com

the result of consuming food, he can enjoy good health and longevity *(āyu)* good appearance *(vaṇṇa)*, blisssful dwelling *(sukha)*, good strength *(bala)* and greater wisdom *(paṭibhāna)* as he can study well. As the monk enjoys these five benefits, the donor of food will also enjoy the same benefits in many existences. When the monk becomes learned and can preach sermons, many listerners will get great benefits from understanding the Dhamma.

The trend of kamma-results works like the ripples on the surface of a pond caused by the fall of a stone, or like the echo of our voice at the mountain side, or like **Newton's Law of Motion** in physics: *"To every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction."*

If we smile to a person, he will smile to us.
If we frown at him, he will also frown at us.

* *"Bad deeds will bear bad results.*
Good deeds will bear good results.
As one sows the seed, so shall one reap the fruit." *(The Buddha)*

* *If one thinks, speaks or acts with a corrupted mind, evil results or suffering caused by that kamma will follow him as the wheel of a wagon follows the ox's hoof.*
(Dhammapada 1)

* *If one thinks, speaks or acts with a pure, wholesome mind, good results or happiness caused by that kamma will follow him as his shadow does after him. (Dhammapada 2)*

http://www.dhammadownload.com

3 The Way Asynchronous Kammas Bear Results

Asynchronous kammas resemble plant seeds and the way they bear results also resembles the way plant seeds produce new plants.

Sadisaṁ pākaṁ janeti.
Kamma will produce results similar to it.

Yādisaṁ vappate bījaṁ tādisaṁ harate phalaṁ.
As you sow the seed so shall you reap the fruit.

Kālyānakārī kalyānaṁ pāpakārī ca pāpakaṁ.
Who does good receives good.
Who does bad receives bad.

The Way Kamma Bears Results Similar to It

A kamma bears results similar to the way it was done. This way of bearing results by kammas is called the **Law of Kamma** *(Kamma-niyāma)*. The following stories will illustrate this law.

While the Buddha was residing at Jetavana monastery, three men came to him almost simultaneously.

The first man said, "Venerable Sir, when I passed by a village near the city gate on my way to Jetavana monastery, a house in the village was on fire. A grass-ring for putting pots on it caught fire. It flew up by the force of the fire to the sky and hung itself on the neck of a crow which was flying high in the sky. The crow was burnt to death."

The second man said, "Venerable Sir, I had just returned from an oversea trip. Our sailing ship with about seven hundred passengers departed from the harbour and stopped still in the middle of the ocean. It could not be moved by any means. Then the chief navigator told the

http://www.dhammadownload.com

passengers that a person with a very heinous deed must be on board. That person must be found by drawing lots, and thrown into the sea in order to save the lives of others.

"So they agreed to draw lots. It was the chief navigator's wife who got the bad lot. As she looked calm, simple, innocent and pretty, travellers took pity on her and suggested to draw lots again. Again she got the bad lot in the second time and also in the third time. So a sand-pot was tied to her neck and she was thrown into the ocean. The ship moved immediately. We got to our destination, carried out trading and returned."

The third man then related his story: "Venerable Sir, I passed by a mountain on my way through a forest. Seven travelling monks went into a cave in the mountain to take rest for a while. But a big rock immediately rolled down from the top of the mountain and blocked the entrance of the cave. The monks could not push the rock away and could not ask for help. So they had to stay in the cave without food and water for seven days. On the eighth day the rock rolled away by itself and the monks could come out."

They asked the Buddha what were the causes behind these strange incidents.

"Sabbe sattā kammasakā kammaṁ satte vibajjati."

"All beings are the owners of their kammas. Their kammas manipulate and determine their fates and destinies."

As the men did not understand the answer of the Buddha, they requested him to explain it in detail.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

"Lay devotes, **the crow** was a farmer in its past existence. The farmer was angry with a bull which he could not manage to work. He tied a bundle of straw on the neck of the bull, set fire to the bundle and set the bull free. The bull was burnt severely and it ran and ran. Finally it died. Because of this bad kamma, the burning grass-ring flew up to the sky, hung itself on the neck of the crow, and burnt the crow to death.

"The chief navigator's wife was a pretty village maiden in her past existence. Her lover died and became a dog. The young dog followed her wherever she went. Village lads made fun of her saying that she was going out hunting with her dog and would bring good meat for them. She was ashamed. When she went out the next time, she tried to drive away the dog not to follow her but to no avail. She became angry. She tied a pot of sand around the dog's neck and threw the dog into the water in a ditch. She met the same fate when she became the chief navigator's wife in her next existence."

"Why were the monks shut up in a cave, Sir?"

"The monks were cowherds in their past existence. One evening when they were about to drive the cattle home, they saw a monitor lizard enter a mound. As they had no time to catch the lizard they blocked the hole of the mound with branches with the intention of catching the lizard the next day.

"However, starting from the next day they took the cattle to a new grassland for a week. They returned to the old grassland on the eighth day. When they saw the mound they remembered the monitor lizard. They removed the

http://www.dhammadownload.com

branches from the hole of the mound and waited with sticks to beat the lizard. But the lizard, being starved for a week, was so thin and feeble that they felt pity for it and let it go. So the monks were also starved for seven days in the cave." *(Dhammapada stories, Vol. II, Tayojanastory)*

No Place to Hide

Not in the sky, nor in the middle of the ocean, nor in the cave of a mountain, is there a place, where one may escape from the consequences of an evil deed.

(Dhammapada 127)

4 Bearing Results a Billionfold

Most people take notice of the immediate results of an action. They do not know that asynchronous kammas can bear results a billionfold in many subsequent existences. As more than a trillion minds can arise and dissolve in a snap of the fingers or in a wink, billions of wholesome kammas are deposited in a mental stream when a meritorious deed is done. These kammas can bear good results more than a billionfold.

So it is said that *"if we give alms as much as a seed of banyan tree, we shall reap the fruits greater than a banyan tree."*

In the same way in performing an evil action billions of unwholesome kammas are deposited in the mental stream. Each strong unwholesome kamma can condition a woeful existence to arise. So a person may be reborn in woeful abodes a million times for performing an evil action. As the results of evil actions are terrible and very

http://www.dhammadownload.com

frightening, we should be very careful to avoid evil and to do good.

Since wholesome actions bear good results more than a billionfold, they are very reliable. As kammas bear results similar to them, if one wishes to be rich in every successive existence, one should give alms as much as one can afford and as often as possible. If one wishes to live happily in many successive existences, one should observe moral precepts diligently. One allows all living beings to live happily without enmity and danger by keeping pure morality. So one will enjoy similar benefits in many existences.

If one wishes to possess wide knowledge and great wisdom in many subsequent existences, one should study Buddhist Canons and literature and undertake meditation. Also whenever one performs meritorious deeds one should make a wish, 'May I become a person of great wisdom". To attain emancipation from the round of suffering one should wish: 'May the merit of this meritorious deed support me to realize Nibbāna as soon as possible."

If beloved ones, friends and relatives perform similar meritorious deeds together with the wish to be together in many future existences, their wishes will be materialized.

Isn't it Guilty to Kill an Animal?

According to the Creation Theory animals are created for the use of men and men can kill them and use their meat as food. It is not sinful to kill animals.

Some say that animals have no intelligence and so it is not sinful to kill them. This is not true for even tiny animals

http://www.dhammadownload.com

like ants have intelligence. They know how to find food, how to inform their friends to come to the place where food is found, and how to store up food underground.

Because all beings have intelligence, all beings love themselves most and they are afraid of pain and death. Since one is afraid of death oneself, if one kills another being cruelly without sympathy, will it be just and right?

All beings tremble at the rod. Life is dear to all. Comparing others with oneself, one should neither torture not kill another being.

(Dhammapada 130)

As everyone has undergone uncountable existences in the very long round of rebirths *(Saṁsāra)*, we ourselves have been born as animals many times. Just imagine how scared we were then to be tortured or killed. Besides many animals around us might have been our parents, sons or daughters, or relatives in their past existences.

We have read the story of the village maiden whose lover died and became a dog following her wherever she went. As she did not know about this she cruelly killed the little dog by tying a sand-pot at its neck and throwing it into the ditch water.

The rich Brahmin **Todeyya,** who never gave away any money or anything in donation, became a dog at his house when he died. The dog remembered its past existence and it was very fond of its former son, Subha.

The natural moral law of kamma, *Kamma-niyāma*, clearly demonstrated that killing animals is a dreadful evil action.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

In killing an animal or any living being billions of anger-rooted unwholesome minds arise and dissolve. So billions of unwholesome conascent kammas and billions of unwholesome asynchronous kammas are formed. These kammas will bear their appropriate similar results.

In the Dispensation of Gotama Buddha, **Dhamma Dinnā** was foremost and the best among his female disciples in preaching the Dhamma. She was an Arahant and she possessed the supernormal knowledge of knowing her past existences.

She told her companions that she was the housewife of a brahmin in one of her past existences. One day a close friend of the Brahmin came to their house and her husband asked her to cook good food. As she could not get meat from the market, she killed a kid (little goat) bred at her house by cutting its throat.

Her husband and his friend admired her for the tasty good food she served. But when she died, the unwholesome kamma of killing the kid sent her to hell where she was burnt and tortured for thousands of years.

When she escaped from hell, she was reborn as animals as many times as there were hairs in the body of the kid she killed, and in each of these existences she was killed by having her throat cut.

She killed just one kid. She was killed uncountable times in the same way as she had killed the kid. She had also to suffer terribly in hell for thousands of years. How dreadful are the results of a bad kamma !

http://www.dhammadownload.com

The Beauty Queen in Vesālī

During the time of Gotama Buddha a very beautiful maiden was born by spontaneous rebirth on a mango tree in the mango orchard of Licchavī Princes. She was named **Ambapālī** as she was born on a mango tree.

The gardener dressed her and took her to Licchavī Princes. All the princes liked her and wanted her. But, as she could not be divided among them, she was appointed as a courtesan. She got very high fee. So she became rich. Her exceptional beauty and her richness were the results of her past god kammas. To be a courtesan was the result of her bad kamma. We shall learn about these kammas soon.

When King Bimbisāra was young, he came to Ambapālī as an unknown person and spent several days with her. She got pregnant and gave birth to a son. When this son grew up he became a monk.

Ambapālī donated her mango orchard to the Buddha and the Saṁgha. When she became old, she listened to the sermon given by her son bhikkhu, and she was ordained as a bhikkhuni (female monk). She undertook meditation comparing her aging body with the beautiful body when she was young. She became enlightened as an Arahant with supernormal power.

She told her companions that she had met four Buddhas. At the time of **Phussa Buddha**, she was the Buddha's sister. She offered food to the Buddha and the Saṁgha and prayed that she would be exceptionally beautiful in her every future existence. That was the kamma which made Ambapālī exceptionally beautiful.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

At the time of **Sikhī Buddha** she was a young bhikkunī. One evening she followed other bhikkhunīs to a pagoda and they walked around the pagoda. She stepped on some saliva with phlegm. She instantly made a remark: "Which prostitute has spat this saliva?"

Nobody took notice of her remark. So it seemed that she had insulted no one. But it was an elderly Arahant who had spat the saliva with phlegm. As the Arahant was old, she didn't know that she had spat the saliva when she sneezed.

So Ambapālī had made a serious offence against an Arahant by calling her a prostitute. For this heinous bad kamma she was born in hell when she died in spite of the many good kammas she acquired in that existence. After being tortured in hell for thousands of years, she became prostitutes for ten thousand existences.

At the time of **Kassapa Buddha** she again became a bhikkhunī. She undertook the Noble Threefold Training and made a wish to be reborn by spontaneous rebirth. Thus she was reborn by spontaneous rebirth in her last existence as Ambapālī. As she gained emanicipation from the round of rebirths in **Gotama Buddha's** dispensation, all her suffering came to an end.

(Therī Apādanā, 2. 295-296)

The unpleasnat effect of bad kamma arising from harsh speech is terrible and frightful. One should take great care not to commit immoral verbal action.

To Be Prosperous in Every Successive Existence

As science makes use of natural physical laws to cre-

http://www.dhammadownload.com

ate miracles like supersonic space ships and satellite communication systems so too an upright person can make use of the natural law of kamma to be prosperous in every successive existence.

In the present existence those who have saved much money can put the money in the bank and live on happily with the interest obtained from the bank. But they cannot take their money with them to the next existence.

The benefits obtained from the wholesome kammas of giving alms are more than a billionfold greater than the interest given by the bank. The wholesome kammas of observing moral precepts are more powerful than the wholesome kammas of giving alms. Virtuous persons who keep pure morality for life without doing any harm to living beings will live happily for uncountable existences in the future.

Wholesome kammas of observing moral precepts will condition blissful rebirth to take place in the human realm or celestial realm again and again whereas wholesome kammas of giving alms will provide every successive existence with wealth and prosperity.

A person who took refuge in the Triple Gem and revered the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṁgha throughout his whole life, would enjoy uncountable blissful existences without being born in the woeful state even once and finally receive emancipation from all suffering just by taking refuge in the Triple Gem. Such a person was **Saraṇa-gamana Thera**, a disciple of Gotama Buddha.

Saraṇa-gamaṇa Thera, in one of his past existences, was a poor man who looked after his blind parents at the

http://www.dhammadownload.com

time of **Anomadassī Buddha** one asaṅkheyya (incalculable aeon) and a hundred thousand world cycles ago. He could not pay homage to the Buddha. But he took refuge in the Triple Gem under the guidance of a Chief Disciple of the Buddha and he revered the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṁgha throughout his life. So he had accumulated many billion good kammas.

For this good deed in one life, from the next existence to his last existence in an incalculable aeon and a hundred thousand world cycles, he was reborn again and again in celestial realms and the human realm, never was he cast down to the woeful abodes. He was even born as Sakka, the king of devas, for eighty existences and as Universal Monarch for seventy-five existences.

In his last existence he became a rich man's son in Sāvatthi. At the age of seven he was playing together with other boys when they went into a monastery and a monk admonished them to take refuge in the Triple Gem. After the boy had recited after the monk: *"Buddhaṁ saraṇaṁ gacchāmi, Dhammaṁ saraṇaṁ gacchāmi. Saṁghaṁ saraṇaṁ gacchāmi,"* the boy became an Arahant. Later he was ordained as a monk and known as Saraṇa-gamana Thera. *(Apadāna, 1, 82)*

5 Why People are Different from One Another

In the world today there are 6500 million human beings, but no two of them are identical in appearance as well as in attitude. Even the Siamese twins who are very similar in appearance differ from each other in mental attitude, intelligence, health, life-span, wealth, etc. Who made

http://www.dhammadownload.com

the people to be different?

While the Buddha was residing in Jetavana monastery the lad **Subha** asked him fourteen questions concerning with social affairs.

"Venerable Sir, though there are many human beings in the world, they all are different from one another. Why some people have long lives while others have short lives, why some are sickly while others are healthy, why some are ugly while others are beautiful, why some have few friends while others have many, why some are rich while others are poor, why some are born in high caste and some in low caste, why some are born with much intelligence and some with little intelligence?"

The Buddha first gave the usual essential answer:

"Sabbe sattā kammassakā kammaṁ satte vibhajjati."

"Oh, young man, beings are owners of their deeds, heirs of their deeds, have deeds as their parents, their kin, their refuge. Deeds divide beings in lowness and excellence."

As the kammas done by the people in their past existences as well as in their present existences are different, their fate and fortune are different. Subha requested the Buddha to explain in detail. So the Buddha elaborated his answers as follows.

(1) **Short life and long life**

Some beings like to kill other beings and get in the habit of killing. When they die, they are reborn in four woeful abodes – animal world, ghost world, demon world

http://www.dhammadownload.com

and hell. But if they are reborn as human beings with the support of some good kammas they have done, their lives are short.

Those who have compassion for beings and avoid killing, they are reborn in the deva (celestial) world. But if they are reborn as human beings, they have long lives.

(2) **Poor health and good health**

Some people torture other beings and cause injury to them. On account of that, they are reborn, after death, in the four woeful states. But if they are reborn as human beings with the support of some good kammas they have done, they are sickly and prone to disease.

Those who have compassion and do not cause injury to others are reborn, after death, as celestial beings, or if they are born as human beings, they enjoy good health.

(3) **Being ugly or beautiful**

Some people are short tempered and they become angry easily. Owing to this anger they speak harshly, insulting others. When they die, they are reborn in four woeful abodes. But if they are reborn as human beings with the support of their good kammas, they are ugly.

On the other hand, some people are tolerant, they practise loving-kindness, and they do not become angry easily. They never insult others with harsh speech. When they die, they are reborn as celestial beings, or if they are reborn as human beings, they are beautiful. So if you want to be beautiful, control your anger and practise forgiveness and loving-kindness.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

(4) **Having few friends or many friends**

Some people are jealous and they do not appreciate others' success. On account of that jealousy, they are reborn, after death, in the four woeful states. But if they are reborn as human beings, they have few or no friends.

On the other hand, some people are not jealous and they appreciate others' success. When they die, they are reborn as celestial beings, or if they are reborn as human beings, they have many friends.

(5) **Being poor or rich**

Some people are stingy and much attached to their wealth. They do not give anything in donation. Because of that stinginess, they are reborn, after death, in four woeful states. But if they are reborn as human beings, they are poor.

On the other hand, those who are generous and practise giving arms, are reborn, after death, as celestial beings, or if they are reborn as human beings, they are rich.

(6) **Low class or high class**

Some people are very proud and conceited. They look down on others and have little respect for others. On account of this false pride, they are reborn, after death, in four woeful adodes. But if they are reborn as human beings, they are reborn in low class or caste.

On the other hand, some people have no false pride but have humility. They respect those worthy of respect. When they die, they are reborn as celestial beings, or if they are reborn as human beings they are in high class or caste.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

(7) Being dull-witted or intelligent

Some people have no desire for knowledge and no desire to study. They do not ask questions to learned persons to explain to them which is wholesome and which is unwholesome, which is right and which is worng, which should be practised and which should be avoided, which is beneficial in the present as well as in the future. With no knowledge of right conduct, they perform wrong actions and thus when they die, they are reborn in four woeful abodes. But if they are reborn as human beings with the support of some good kammas, they are dull-witted.

On the other hand, some people have desire for knowledge, like to study, and ask questions. They know right and wrong and live righteously. When they die, they are reborn as celestial beings, or if they are reborn as human beings, they are intelligent.

(Uparipaṇṇāsa Pāḷi, Cūla Kamma Vibhaṅga Sutta)

The answers of the Buddha to Subha's questions are logical and rational. They can be verified by one's experience in insight meditation. They give good guidelines how to lead a righteous life so as to be reborn as a handsome or beautiful and intelligent person in a rich family in high class and with many good friends.

The Buddha rightly points out that all beings are owners of their deeds, owners of their kammas. Kamma alone is their property; nothing else is. So Kamma is very important to everyone.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

The Mentality and the Materiality Produced by Kamma

Unwholesome kammas and wholesome kammas produce both mental entities and material entities as their results.

Kamma-result Mental Entities

Unwholesome kammas give rise to unwholesome resultantconsciousnesses and associated mental factors.

Sense-sphere wholesome kammas give rise to sense-sphere wholesome resultant consciousnesses and associated mental factors

Fine-material wholesome kammas give rise to fine-material resultant consciousnesses and associated mental factors.

Immaterial wholesome kammas give rise to immaterial resultant consciousnesses and associated mental factors.

Resultant consciousness functions as rebirth consciousness, life-continuum and death consciousness.

Resultant consciousness and associated mental factors make up four mental aggregates.

The material entities produced by kammas are kamma-born matter and kamma-conditioned heat-born matter.

Kamma-born Matter

(1) Eye sensitive clear matter (*cakkhu pasāda*, eye door)
(2) Ear sensitive clear matter (*sotapasāda*, ear door)
(3) Nose sensitive clear matter (*ghānapasāda*, nose door)
(4) Tongue sensitive clear matter (*jivhāpasāda*, tongue door)

http://www.dhammadownload.com

(5) Body sensitive clear matter (*kāyapasāda* , body door)
(6) Material quality of life (*jivita rūpa*, physical life)
(7) Material quality that imparts femaninity (*itthibhāva rūpa)*
(8) Material quality that imparts masculinity (*purisahhāva rūpa)*
(9) The heart base (*hadaya-vatthu)*

Matter does not arise singly. Matter always arise as material groups *(rūpa-kalāpas).* The above kamma-born matter arises in combination of eight indivisible matters formed by kamma – viz., the element of extension *(pathavī),* the element of cohesiveness *(āpo),* the element of heat *(tejo),* the element of motion *(vāyo),* form *(vaṇṇa),* odour *(gandha),* taste *(rasa)* and nutritive essence *(ojā).*

Depending on the potential energy of the reproductive kamma, the seeing ability of the eye, the hearing ability of the ear, the ability to smell, the ability to enjoy the taste, etc., may be different among different persons.

Kamma-conditioned Heat-born Matter

This matter is called *'kamma-paccaya utuja rūpa'* in Pāḷi, meaning *'matter born of heat with kamma as the root cause.'*

Depending on the wholesome kammas and unwholesome kammas of living beings, the climate may remain regular with regular winds and rains or it may change drastically causing severe droughts or great floods due to continuous torrential rain. Again depending on these climatic conditions, agricultural products such as rice, wheat, peas, maize, etc., may have full nourishment or may be devoid of

http://www.dhammadownload.com

nourishment. Again depending on full nournishment or malnutrition, living beings may become healthy or unhealthy, and may enjoy long life or short life.

Besides when beings are in celestial realms, both in deva realms and brahmā realms, celestial abodes, stately buildings, celestial food, gardens, flowers, trees of plenty, etc., which are made up of heat-born matter, also arise for their use on account of their good kammas. In hell too, hell fire, molten iron, iron rollers, etc., are formed by heat born matter to torture denizens of hell due to their bad kammas.

Thus human beings with good kammas are born on fertile land with good climate, green trees, beautiful gardens, plenty of nutritious agricultural products and plenty of water. People of bad kammas are, however, born on barren land with no water, no fertile soil, no agricultural products and with extreme weather.

(Religious Affairs Department, 'Buddhist Manual', Vol.I, pp. 661-662)

http://www.dhammadownload.com

8

Different Kinds of Kammas

1 Four Classes of Kammas Consisting of Four Types of Kammas each

How numerous are the asynchronous kammas that are conveyed in the mental streams of living beings? Think of it carefully. Since consciousness with its associated mental factors can arise and perish more than a trillion per snap of the fingers, billions of wholesome kammas will be formed every second while one is performing meritorious deeds. Similarly billions of unwholesome kammas are formed every second while one is performing an evil action.

Therefore there will be many billions of wholesome kammas and unwholesome kammas in one's mental stream which arise from moral actions and immoral actions performed in this existence. Similarly many billions of wholesome kammas and unwholesome kammas would be formed in each of our uncountabe past existences. All these kammas have been conveyed in the mental stream life after

http://www.dhammadownload.com

life up to the present existence. So wholesome kammas and unwholesome kammas in the mental stream are so numerous that they cannot be counted even by a super computer.

All these kammas are waiting for the chance to bear results. Since kammas are so numerous that only the Buddha would know which kamma will bear results in what manner at what time.

Kamma vipāko acintiyo.

How kammas will bear results cannot be known by just thinking and pondering.

To let people know how various kammas produce their effects the Buddha classifies kammas into four groups of four kammas each as follows:

(1) Four types of kammas with respect to function,
(2) Four types of kammas in priority of bearing results,
(3) Four types of kammas with respect to the time of bearing results,
(4) Four types of kammas with respect to the places where the effects arise.

2 Four Types of Kammas with Respect to Function

(1) *Janaka kamma* – Productive kamma that can produce a new existence,
(2) *Upatthambhaka kamma* – Supportive kamma,
(3) *Upapīlaka kamma* – Obstructive kamma,
(4) *Upaghātaka kamma* – Destructive kamma that destroys productive kamma and produces its own results.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

(1) **Janaka Kamma** – *Productive Kamma*

Productive kamma is a powerful kamma that can produce a new existence. It is the kamma that has attained the status of a full course of action, wholesome or unwholesome, and can perform the function of producing its resultant consciousness together with its associated mental factors and kamma-born matter throughout the course of one existence.

The arising of resultant consciousness, associated mental factors and kamma-born matter means the arising of five aggregates of existence that constitute a new existence.

Consciousness or minds arise one after another continuously in a series without any break. The first resultant consciousness serves as **'rebirth consciousness**, subsequent resultant consciousness as **'life-continuum'** and the final resultant consciousness as **'death consciousness.'**

If the productive kamma is sense-sphere wholesome consciousness, the new existence arises either in the human realm or one of the sense sphere celestial realms called 'deva realms'. If the productive kamma is an unwholesome kamma, the new existence arises in one of the four woeful realms. If the productive kamma is strong, the new being will enjoy long life; if the productive kamma is weak, the being will enjoy short life.

(2) **Upatthambhaka Kamma** – *Supportive Kamma*

Supportive kamma is not potent enough to produce a new existence, but it supports the productive kamma either by enabling it to produce its pleasant or painful results over an extended time or by reinforcing the continuum of

http://www.dhammadownload.com

aggregates produced by the productive kamma.

For a person who is born in a blissful realm with the support of a wholesome productive kamma, all the wholesome kammas that come along in his mental stream will act as supportive kammas whereas all unwholesome kammas in his mental stream will act as obstructive kammas. The wholesome kammas performed in the new existence will also act as supportive kammas whereas new unwholesome kammas will act as obstructive kammas.

For example, if a person performs meritorious deeds such as alms giving, observing moral precepts and undertaking meditation, the new wholesome kammas so produced will act as supportive kammas contributing to the extension of his life-span and ensuring that he is healthy and well provided with the necessities of life. These new kammas will also support the old wholesome kammas in the mental stream to bear results. When many wholesome kammas act together, all his enterprises, business matters and social dealings will be successful and he will become prosperous.

(3) **Upapīlaka Kamma** – *Obstructive Kamma*

Obstructive kamma weakens, interrupts or retards the function of productive kamma.

When a wholesome productive kamma gives rise to a new existence in a blissful plane, many billions of wholesome as well as unwholesome kammas will be carried over to the new existence. Some of these wholesome kammas will produce good effects as supportive kammas and some unwholesome kammas will bear bad effects as obstructive kammas.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

The same phenomena will occur when an unwholesome productive kamma gives rebirth in a woeful plane. But here wholesome kammas will act as obstructive kammas by obstructing and retarding the effects of the unwholesome productive kamma whereas unwholesome kammas will play the role of supportive kammas by enhancing the painful effects of the productive kamma.

So there are ups and downs in life as wholesome supportive kammas and unwholesome obstructive kammas have the chances alternately to bear results.

Especially when a person performs good deeds continuously, the collective wholesome kammas become powerful and they can suppress unwholesome kammas not to have the chance to bear results. As wholesome kammas enjoy the privileges to bear results, he will enjoy many good things in life.

However, if he becomes forgetful to perform meritorious deeds because he is enjoying the luxury of life as the results of his prosperity and his unwholesome kammas are increasing due to his unwise behaviour, the collective unwholesome kammas become strong enough to prevent wholesome kammas from bearing results. The collective unwholesome kammas will bear bad effects one after another.

Then his commercial enterprises and business matters will fail, his fortune will slide down encountering many losses in property, in wealth, in reputation and in social status. Members of his family may become sick, may have accidents, or may even die. So we have the sayings: *"Misfortune never comes alone"*, *"The spear falls at a low*

http://www.dhammadownload.com

place" and *"The rain follows the widow where she goes."*

When the fortune becomes worse and worse, he will probably consult a fortune-teller or an astrologer to help him stop the bad fortune and bring the good fortune. In reality the positions of the stars and the planets have little or no effects on the fortune of each individual. It is the unwholesome kammas that a person has accumlated that are bringing bad fortune. The most practical way to get out of this bad situation is to perform meritorious deeds as much as possible so that the good kammas can suppress the bad kammas to stop bearing bad results and support the accumulated good kammas to bear good results.

So, we have ups and downs in life due to the alternate results of good kammas and bad kammas which are always contesting to gain the upper hand. Thus the world-famous English play-writer, **William Shake-speare** wrote:

Life is full of ups and down.
Life is not a bed of roses.

(4) Upaghātaka Kamma – *Destructive Kamma*

Descructive kamma not only cuts off the effect of the productive kamma but also destroys the productive kamma and produces its own results. In other words, the person dies abruptly and is reborn in accordance with the destructive kamma.

A destructive kamma may be wholesome or unwholesome kamma which replaces another weaker kamma, prevents it from giving its result while producing its own result instead. For example, somebody may, through his produc-

http://www.dhammadownload.com

tive kamma, have been originally destined for a long life-span, but a destructive kamma may arise and bring about a premature death by such means as heart-attack, car-accident, etc.

On the other hand a woeful ghost *(peta)* is born in a woeful abode due to an unwholesome productive kamma. His former relatives offer food and robes to the monks and share merit with him. If he can appreciate the good deed and say *'sādhu,, sādhu'* or 'well done, well done', the wholesome kamma that he acquires can act as a destructive kamma, cutting off the unwholesome productive kamma and producing its results so that the woeful ghost dies suddenly and is reborn as a celestial being as the result of the wholesome destructive kamma.

It is delightful and satisfactory to see how the law of kamma explains actual events very beautifully.

The Operation of the Four Types of Kammas on Devadatta

As an operation of the above four types of kammas, the case of Devadatta may be cited. His good productive kamma conditions him to be born in a royal family. His continuous comforts and prosperity were due to the combined action of the productive kamma and wholesome supportive kammas. His ordination as a bhikkhu together with other Sākiya princes such as Ānanda and Anuruddha and his later attainment of mundane supernormal power through meditation were also the results of his wholesome supportive kammas.

Then he performed very heinous deeds of trying to

http://www.dhammadownload.com

kill the Buddha, wounding the toe of the Buddha and causing a schism in the Saṁgha Order. When these unwholesome deeds bore results as obstructive kammas, he was excommunicated from the Saṁgha community. Not long after that the heinous deed of causing a schism in the Saṁgha Order operated on him as destructive kamma. He was swallowed by a fissure appearing in the earth and pulled down to Avīci hell by Avīci fire.

3 Four Types of Kammas by Order of Priority

(1) *Garuka kamma* – Weighty kamma,

(2) *Āsanna kamma* – Near-death kamma,

(3) *Āciṇṇa kamma* – Habitual kamma,

(4) *Kaṭattā kamma* – Unspecified kamma.

All the kammas in the mental stream are classified as four types in the order of precedence in taking on the role of generating rebirth in the next existence at the time of near death.

(1) **Garuka Kamma** – *Weighty Kamma*

Weighty kamma is of such powerful moral weight that it can neither be stopped nor replaced by any other kamma as the determinant of next rebirth. In other words, it will certainly produce its result to give birth to the next existence.

Bad weighty kammas are the five heinous crimes *(Pañcānantriya kamma)* and permanent wrong view *(Niyata-micchādiṭṭhi)*.

Five heinous Crimes are

(1) *Pitughātaka kamma* – parricide or killing the father,

http://www.dhammadownload.com

(2) *Mātughātaka kamma* – matricide or killing the mother,
(3) *Arahantaghātaka kamma* – killing an Arahant,
(4) *Lohituppādaka kamma* – wounding a Buddha,
(5) *Saṁghabhedaka kamma* – creating a schism in the Saṁgha.

The crime becomes more heinous in the descending order described above. Any person who commits one of these crimes will surely be sent to hell when he dies.

A permanent wrong view that strongly denies kamma and its result is also included in the bad weighty kamma. When a person with the permanent wrong view dies, he will be reborn in Lokantrika hell which is always dark.

On the wholesome side, the five fine-material wholesome kammas *(rūpāvacara kusala kammas)* and the four immaterial wholesome kammas *(arūpāvacara kusala kammas)* are good weighty kammas. A person who attains a jhāna and maintains it till death will be reborn in a brahmā realm when he dies.

Those who attain Path wisdom and Fruition wisdom in undertaking insight meditation acquire supramundane wholesome kamma *(lokuttara kusala kamma)* which also serves as a weighty kamma for it closes the doors of the four woeful abodes for ever. So they will be reborn only in blissful realms on their death.

If someone were to develop the jhāna and later were to commit one of the five heinous crimes, his good kamma will be obliterated by the evil deed, and the latter would generate rebirth in hell. For example, the Buddha's ambitious cousin **Devadatta** lost his psychic powers and was

http://www.dhammadownload.com

reborn in Avīci hell for wounding the Buddha and causing a schism in the Saṁgha.

Furthermore, if someone were first to commit one of the heinous crimes, he could not later reach a sublime or supramundane attainment, because the evil kamma would create an insurmountable obstruction. Thus **King Ajātasattu,** while listening to the *Sāmañña-phala Sutta* preached by the Buddha, had all the other conditions for reaching stream-entry; but he could not attain the Path and Fruit for he had killed his father, **King Bimbisāra**, who was a stream-enterer.

Later, though he performed many great meritorious deeds including the sponsorship to the First Great Buddhist Council and the erection of a great stupa enshrining the Buddha's relics, he did not escape the rebirth in hell due to his heinous crime.

2 **Āsanna Kamma** – *Near-death Kamma*

Near-death kamma is a potent wholesome or unwholesome kamma done or remembered shortly before death. In the absence of any weighty kamma, this death-proximate kamma will generally take on the role of generating rebirth because of its great potency due to proximity.

If a person of bad character performs a good deed just before dying or remembers a good deed he has done in his last moments, he will receive a fortunate rebirth. On the other hand, if a good person dwells on an evil deed done earlier, or performs an evil deed just before dying, he will undergo an unhappy rebirth.

For this reason it is very important to arrange for one's

http://www.dhammadownload.com

parents or beloved ones to perform meritorious deeds just before they die, or to remind a dying person of his good deeds or to urge him to arouse good thoughts during his last moments.

Even though a bad person may attain a happy rebirth on account of a good near-death kamma, this does not mean that he will escape the fruits of the bad deeds he has committed during the course of life. When they meet with favourable conditions, these bad kammas too will produce their due results. Only if the person undertakes the Noble Threefold Training strenuously and attain the Path-wisdom and its Fruition wisdom, will all the bad kammas lose their potency to cast him down to the woeful abodes.

The Strange Kammas of the Water-pot-stand Lady

The well-known Taungmyo Sayadaw, **Venerable Janakābhivaṁsa,** narrated the story of the Water-pot-stand Lady in his *Paṭṭhāna Discourse.* This lady from Amarapura Town was rich and pious with strong faith in the Triple Gem.

She built a monastery and donated to the chief monk, Taung Taman Sayadaw. In Amarapura water is scarce in the summer. So she set water pots on stands at the cross-roads in the town. So she was known as the Water-pot-stand Lady.

She died at old age. At her funeral Taung Taman Sayadaw led the procession to the cemetery and administered the act of taking refuge in the Triple Gem and sharing merit with the deceased. He also delivered a suitable

http://www.dhammadownload.com

sermon to the people.

Also at the ceremony of offering alms food to the monks on the seventh day of her demise, Taung Taman Sayadaw again delivered a sermon. On his return to his monastery, he heard someone call him on the road, "Venerable sir, venerable sir."

He recognized the voice to be similar to the voice of the Water-pot-stand Lady. So he asked, "Is that the water-pot-stand Lady?"

"Yes, venerable sir", came the answer.

"What are you now?"

No answer. Only when the chief monk asked her the third time, did she give the answer in a low voice.

"I am now a woeful ghost, sir."

"Why have you become a woeful ghost? You have done so many meritorious deeds."

"I worried for my daughters and grand daughters as they cried just before I died."

At the time of near death it is very important to develop wholesome minds by being mindful of meritorious actions or the Buddha's attributes. Sons and daughters should remind their mother or father who is about to die to remember the meritorious deeds she or he has done, or to undertake meditation such as recollecting one attribute of the Buddha – *'Arahaṁ, Arahaṁ.'* They should not cry near the dying person.

Otherwise the parent would worry for the sons and daughters: "Would everything be all right with my sons and daughters when I pass away?"

http://www.dhammadownload.com

Worry develops anger-rooted consciousness. Attachment to sons and daughters develops greed-rooted consciousness. These unwholesome minds will pave the way for an unwholesome kamma to become the determinant of the next rebirth. So the Water-pot-stand Lady became a woeful ghost.

"I didn't have the chance to listen to your sermon at the cemetery on the funeral day," said the ghost.

"Why didn't you listen to my sermon?"

"The female ghosts who are my new companions take me to the hill with a water fall, sir."

In the human world rich persons who can make great donations often are popular among the people. Everybody wants to give favour and respect to them. When they die and become woeful ghosts, the ghosts again want to give favour and respect to them. So the female ghosts befriended the Water-pot-stand Lady ghost and took her to a pleasant place in the world of the woeful ghosts.

The intention of taking her away to the hill with water-fall was to deny her the chance to listen to the sermon. If she had the chance to listen to the sermon, the wholesome kamma she acquired could act as destructive kamma, putting an end to her woeful state and giving her a new blissful existence.

The woeful ghosts wanted her to remain in the woeful state so that her former sons and daughters, seeing some signs that their mother was in the woeful abode, would offer alms food to the monks frequently to share merit with her. When the food in excess were thrown away, the

http://www.dhammadownload.com

woeful ghosts had the opportunity to enjoy *'grand dinner.'*

"But, I could listen to your sermon today, venerable sir, I also received the share of merit from my sons and daughters when they shared their merit of offering alms food to the monks. So I shall have the chance to go to a blissful abode soon. I am going, sir." The woeful ghost's voice disappeared.

The Buddha Dhamma can help people to liberate their dead relatives from the woeful state. It is helping in a rational way by developing wholesome kammas. If we can make use of the tremendous power of wholesome kammas, we shall reap great benefits.

How a Son can Help his Father to Gain Blissful Rebirth

Venerable Soṇa Thera, who resided on Soṇa Giri Hill in Sri Lanka, gained enlightenment as an Arahant due to his great effort. But his father was still a hunter though he was very old. Only when he became too feeble to hunt, did he become a monk at his son's monastery.

Soon the old monk became seriously ill. He saw big dogs with red eyes and sharp teeth crawling up the hill to bite him. He was frightened and told his son, "My son, big dogs are coming up the hill to bite me. Drive them away."

Venerable Soṇa, being an Arahant, immediately knew that his father was seeing near-death sign - the sign of hell showing that the old monk would be cast down to hell after death due to his bad kamma of hunting.

Venerable Soṇa asked novices to gather flowers and

http://www.dhammadownload.com

spread them at the pagoda on the hill. Then they carried the old monk to the pagoda together with his bed.

"Venerable father, please pay obeisance to the pagoda. We offer flowers to the pagoda on your behalf. Take delight in offering flowers to the Buddha."

The old monk paid obeisance to the pagoda. He also took delight in offering flowers to the Buddha. At that time the near-death sign changed.

"My son, very beautiful step mothers of yours are calling me to come along with them. Shall I go with them?"

"Please go along with them, father."

The son knew that it was celestial maidens who came to take his father. He was delighted that his effort to prevent his father from being cast down to hell was successful.

(Religious Affairs Department, Buddhist Manual, Vol. I, p. 677)

3 Āciṇṇa Kamma – *Habitual Kamma*

Habitual kamma is a deed, either good or bad, that one performs regularly or habitually, or it may be a deed which is performed once and is recollected frequently.

For teachers who always teach their students with the good intention of imparting useful knowledge to them, that regular teaching becomes their wholesome habitual kamma. If a woman cooks alms food daily and offers the food to monks, this good deed becomes her wholesome habitual kamma.

If a person observes moral precepts daily and reflects

http://www.dhammadownload.com

on his pure morality regularly, his observation of morality becomes his wholesome habitual kamma. For a person who undertakes meditation regularly, that meditation practice becomes his wholesome habitual kamma.

For those who make fishing, hunting or stealing their regular means of earning a living, that unwholesome action becomes their unwholesome habitual kammas. Since Venerable Soṇa's father was a hunter for life, hunting was his unwholesome habitual kamma. So he saw hell dogs as the near-death sign.

In the absence of weighty kamma and a potent near-death kamma, the habitual kamma generally assumes the role of generating the next rebirth.

Habit is the second nature.

The wholesome deed or unwholesome deed which one performs regularly becomes one's second nature or one's natural behaviour. So one will be mindful of it and doing it regularly without urging by oneself. The teacher who teaches students regularly will see the scene of her teaching to students near the time of her death. The hunter will see the scene of hunting near the time of his death. A person who always recollects the attribute of the Buddha will be mindful of the attribute near the time of death. Thus habitual kamma will become near-death kamma and take the role of generating the next rebirth.

It is important to live well, but it is more important to die well. The present time is the best time to prepare for our death. The best way to prepare for our death is to develop a habitual kamma. We can choose any meritorious deed we like – alms giving, observing moral

http://www.dhammadownload.com

precepts, or meditaing. If we perform it regularly, it will become habitual kamma and bear results to generate a good rebirth.

4 Kaṭattā Kamma - *Unspecified Kamma*

Unspecified kamma is any other deed, not included in the afore-mentioned categories, which has been done earlier and forgotten, but is potent enough to take on the role of generating rebirth. This type of kamma becomes operative when there is no kamma of the other three types to exercise this function.

The Simile of a Cattle Compound

As the number of wholesome kammas and unwholesome kammas in the mental stream of each individual is so great that it would be very difficult to predict which kamma will have the chance to condition the next rebirth. The kammas will compete with one another to have the chance to bear results. If a weighty kamma is present, it will easily win the competition and condition the next rebirth.

If weighty kamma is absent, which is often the case, the near-death kamma will have the chance to condition the new existence. If both weighty and near-death kammas are absent, the habitual kammas will get the opportunity to condition the next rebirth. If habitual kamma is also absent, then an unspecified kamma will take the role of generating the next existence.

The way these four types of kammas bear results is explained by **the simile of a cattle compound.** Suppose that many cattle are kept in a big compound for the night. In the morning the door of the compound is opened to let

http://www.dhammadownload.com

the cattle go out to the pasture. Now which one will come out first?

All the cattle want to get out of the compound as soon as possible. So there will be a big rush and scramble for reaching the gate. But, if there is an outstanding bull, which is respected by all as their leader, that one will majestically walk to the gate and come out first. This one is like a weighty hamma which is uncontested to bear its result in conditioning a new existence.

If, however, there is no outstanding bull regarded as the leader, the one nearest the door will come out first. This is similar to the near-death kamma bearing its fruit to generate a new existence.

If the above two types of cattle are absent, a vigilant bull or cow, which has taken notice of the time of opening the door regularly, will walk to the door just before it is opened and come out first when it is opened. This is similar to the habitual kamma taking the role of productive kamma for generating rebirth of the next existence.

Sometimes, when there is no outstanding bull or no one near the door or no vigilant one, there will be a big scramble with stronger ones pushing their way. In this scramble an old frail one, by being pushed by others, may come out of the door first. This is similar to the case when an unspecified kamma has the chance to condition the next existence.

There are many wholesome kammas and unwholesome kammas in the mental stream that can act as unspecified hammas. If a wholesome unspecified kamma gets the chance to bear results, one will be fortunate. But

http://www.dhammadownload.com

if an unwholesome unspecified kamma gets the role of conditioning the next existence in a woeful abode, it will be very difficult to get out of the woeful abodes where one shall be reborn again and again.

We should not take things lightly and let an unwholesome unspecified kamma decide our fate. We can mould our fate and destiny as we like. So we should develop a wholesome habitual kamma that we like and let it determine our next rebirth.

Born in Avīci Hell in spite of many Good Kammas

Queen Mallikā, the chief queen of King Kosala in Sāvatthi, performed many meritorious deeds together with the king. She even arranged the most outstanding offering of alms food by the king to the Buddha and the Saṁgha. But unfortunately she also committed one significant immoral action.

At one time, while she was taking a bath, a dog came into the bath-room, and she enjoyed sexual pleasure with the dog. When she came out of the bath-room, the dog followed her. This was noticed by the king who immediately questioned her. She vehemently lied to the king saying that the king must have had a distorted vision for she came out alone. The king believed his beloved wife and excused her.

But this immoral act came to her mind at her near-death moment. Because this unwholesome unspecified kamma assumed the rebirth-generative function, she had to suffer in Avīci hell, the worst hell, for seven days.

King kosala believed that his wise beloved queen would

http://www.dhammadownload.com

be reborn in a celestial realm. But to make sure, he went to Jetavana monastery to ask the Buddha. However, the Buddha, by his supernormal power, made the king forget to ask the question. So the king talked about other things and went back to the palace.

On the next subsequent days he again went to Jetavana monastery daily to ask the Buddha where Mallikā was born. Again the Buddha made him forget to ask the question day after day. Only on the eighth day did the Buddha let the king ask the question. The Buddha answered that she was in Tusitā celestial realm.

Mallikā was quite lucky to suffer for only seven human days in Avīci. Of the many wholesome kammas she had acquired, one powerful kamma assumed the role of destructive kamma which destroyed her bad productive kamma and its effect that conditioned her hell existence and produced its good effect so that she was reborn in Tusitā realm. So wholesome kammas are very reliable.

4 Four Types of Kammas with respect to the Time of bearing Results

(1) *Diṭṭhadhamma vedanīya kamma* – immediately effective kamma,

(2) *Upapajjavedanīya kamma* – subsequently effective kamma,

(3) *Aparāpariyavedanīya kamma* – indefinitely effective kamma,

(4) *Ahosi kamma* – defunct kamma.

When one performs moral actions or immoral actions, unwholesome consciousness or wholesome consciousness

http://www.dhammadownload.com

arises seven times as javana consciousness in each cognitive series. Javana consciousnesses arise with great momentum enjoying the sense object; hence they are called *'impulsive consciousnesses.'*

The volition associated with the first javana consciousness, which is the weakest among the seven javana consciousnesses, is called *'immediately effective kamma.'* This kamma can ripen and yield its results in the present existence.

The volition associated with the seventh javana consciousness, which is the strongest among the seven javana consciousnesses, is called *'subsequently effective kamma'*. This kamma can ripen and yield its results in the next existence.

The volitions associated with the middle five javana consciousnesses are called *'subsequently effective kammas.'* They can ripen at any time from the second future existence till the last existence when one attains Arahantship, and they will bear results whenever they gain opportunity.

The first two types of kammas become *'defunct kammas'* if they do not have the opportunity to bear fruits during their specified time limits.

(1) **Diṭṭha dhammavedanīya Kamma –**

Immediately Effective Kamma

In one snap of the fingers more than one trillion minds arise and perish, and one cognitive series of consciousness consists of about seventeen consciousnesses. So in one trillion minds there are more than 50000 million cognitive

http://www.dhammadownload.com

series of consciousness. In these cognitive series there will be more than 50000 million first javana consciousnesses, more than 50000 seventh javana consciousnesses and more than 250000 middle javana consciousnesses.

Thus in paying obeisance to the Buddha just for a moment or in smashing a mosquito, at least 50000 million immediately effective kammas, 50000 million subsequently effective kammas, 250000 indefinitely effective kammas are formed. Those immediately effective kammas which do not have the chance to bear results in this existence will become defunct.

There are many examples illustrating the operation of immediately effective kammas. The poor man **Mahāduk** who had the opportunity to offer alms food to Kassapa Buddha became rich immediately.

During the time of Gotama Buddha the poor couple, **Puṇṇa** and his wife, had the chance to offer alms food to Venerable Sāriputta who had just emerged from Extinction Attainment *(Nirodha Samāpatti)*. Soon the couple found that all the earth lumps that had come out of the plough of Puṇṇa in the field turned into gold. So the couple became very rich.

In Sāvatthi, the couple named **Kākavaliya** was very poor. They had no proper place to live, no utensils, no mat and no bed. They slept on the ground. They had to share rice porridge which was just enough for one person. One morning when they were about to eat rice porridge, Venerable Kassapa emerged from Extinction Attainment and came to their place. Without eating the porridge they gladly offered it to Venerable Kassapa. Within seven days they got

http://www.dhammadownload.com

gold pots and became very wealthy persons.

The lad **Nanda** committed sexual assault to Upallavanna Therī, the left-hand female Chief Disciple of Gotamma Buddha. He was instantly swallowed up by a fissure appearing in the earth.

The **butcher Cunda** would not take a meal without beef curry. One day as there was no beef curry, he cut off the tongue of a bull, roasted it and ate it. While he was eating, his tongue was automatically cut off and it dropped onto his plate.

At present also, if one takes notice carefully, one can see many examples of the operation of immediately effective kammas. Those who commit crimes such as theft, robbery, rape and murder are punished by law and sentenced to imprisonment. They have to suffer the bad effects of their unwholesome deeds in this very life.

The Kamma Results cannot be Avoided

An interesting article appeared in *Myat Maṅgalā* journal (Vol. 5, No. 8). A lady named **Daw Mar Pu** from Du Yin Seik village, Thaton Township, could not speak words clearly as her upper lip was broken. She had to make a living by selling fish. Putting fish in a big tray and carrying the tray on her head she went around the village, shouting:

"Would you yike to yuy yish?"

The villagers knew what she shouted was "Would you like to buy fish?" But a young man by the name of **Ko Than Tun** made fun of her by shouting as she shouted. She was very sad, but she had to tolerate the insult as she was poor.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

Soon Ko Than Tun's wife gave birth to a son with his upper lip broken like Daw Mar Pu. When the child grew up, he also spoke unclearly like Daw Mar Pu. Later Ko Than Tun got another son with normal features. But when this boy grew up, he played with his elder brother and so he also spoke unclearly as his brother.

Ko Than Tun became poor and his wife had to make batter cakes for sale. As she could not sell all the cakes in front of her house, she asked her elder son, now six years old, to go around the village, selling cakes and shouting: "Would you yike to yuy yakes?"

This time another young man called **Ko Myint Htay** made fun of the boy by shouting as the boy shouted. The boy was ashamed and he cried. Not long afterwards Ko Myint Htay's wife gave birth to a girl with her upper lip broken. So when the girl grew up, she could not also speak clearly.

Thus the kamma results cannot be avoided. The bad results of bad kammas will start coming in this very life.

The Generous are Rewarded in this very Life

Those who perform meritorious deeds also get benefits immediately. When I went to Kachin State in nothern Myanmar on a Dhamma expedition, teaching Abhidhamma and giving Dhamma Lectures, I came across **Ko Tun Tun** and **Ma Way Way.** Ko Tun Tun is a Buddhist from Central Myanmar and Ma Way Way is a Christian from Myit-kyi-nar.

The young couple went to Hpar Kant, known as the land of jewels, fifteen miles east of Myit-kyi-nar. They

http://www.dhammadownload.com

acquired a small plot of land and started digging for jewels. A few days passed by without finding any treasure.

Then a monk came to Phar Kant. The people drew lots for the chance to offer food to the monk. Ko Tun Tun won the lot and the young couple offered alms food to the monk.

A week later Ma Way Way met a monk on the street. She asked the monk, "Do you get enough alms food?"

"I am a guest. It's difficult to get alms food."

"In that case, please come to our house tomorrow for alms food."

When she told her husband about the invitation, Ko Tun Tun was delighted with joy. They prepared wholesome food and offered to the monk the next day. After offering alms food twice, they began to find rubies in their plot of land.

When they returned to Myit-kyi-nar for a while, they found the State Saṁgha President, Wun Tho Sayadaw, building a new monastery. Ko Tun Tun requested the chief monk to let them donate the monastery. After that they got more rubies from their little plot in the treasure land. The monastery they donated is a big, grand, two-storied building. They also donated a Pajaro Wagon to the chief monk.

The more they donate, the richer they become. The wholesome results of alms giving are amazingly plenty and satisfactory.

2 Upapajja-vedanīya Kamma – *Subsequently Effective Kamma*

http://www.dhammadownload.com

The volition associated with the seventh *javana* consciousness, the strongest of the seven *javanas,* is called subsequently effective kamma. This kamma, if it is to ripen, must yield its results in the next coming existence; otherwise it becomes defunct.

An old woman called **Caṇḍālī**, who earned her living by begging, was walking along the main road of Rājagraha city. The Buddha saw her when he looked at the world in the morning. She had done no meritorious deed. So she was destined to be reborn in a woeful abode after death.

The Buddha had compassion for her. So he went out on alms round early to meet Caṇḍālī at the outskirts of the city. As the Buddha stopped in front of Caṇḍālī, she also stopped with the support of her walking stick. She just gazed at the Buddha without knowing the Buddha, thus paying no respect to the Buddha. So she gained no merit yet for meeting the Buddha.

Venerable Mahā Mogallāna, who followed the Buddha, knew the intention of the Buddha to bless her. So he persuaded the old lady, "Caṇḍālī, the Buddha is standing here to bless you. You will soon die and get a woeful rebirth. Pay obeisance to the Buddha to get a good rebirth."

Only then did Caṇḍālī look carefully at the Buddha and revere the Buddha. Paying obeisance to the Buddha just for a minute developed billions of wholesome kammas. Among these kammas, the strongest ones, known as subsequently effective kammas would play the role of generating a new blissful existence soon. The Buddha knew about this and proceeded on his alms round.

Caṇḍālī also proceeded on her way unsteadily. A

http://www.dhammadownload.com

cow with a baby calf butted her. She fell down and died. The good kamma conditioned her to be reborn as a female celestial being in a grand mansion in Tāvatiṁsā realm. She immediately came down and thanked Venerable Mahā Moggallāna for persuading her to pay obeisance to the Buddha.

Ajātasattu prince became King by killing his father, King Biṁbisāra, who was a stream enterer. Ajātasattu's son again murdered Ajātasattu to become king. Ajātasattu's heinous crime bore results similar to it in the present existence and then sent him to hell after death.

Ajātasattu's teacher, **Devadatta,** inflicted a wound on a toe of the Buddha and also caused a schism in the Saṁgha. This heinous kamma played the role of subsequently effective kamma and sent him to Avīci hell.

3 Aparāpariyavedanīya Kamma – *Indefinitely Effective kamma*

The volitions associated with the five middle javana consciousnesses, which are five times greater in number than each of the first two types of kammas, are known as indefinitely effective kammas. They can ripen at any time from the second future existence onwards up till the last existence when one attains Arahantship, and bear results whenever they gain opportunity to do so. They never become defunct so long as the round of rebirths continues.

The **Buddha** fulfilled perfections for four Asaṅkheyya (incalculable aeon) and one hundred thousand world cycles. He enjoyed the good results of these wholesome kammas throughout his long journey towards Buddhahood and he

http://www.dhammadownload.com

became the Fully self-enlightened Buddha with the support of these kammas. Because he had done some bad actions in some existences, he had to suffer from headache, sprain in the back, diarrhoea, etc., even in his last existence as a Buddha.

Venerable Mahā Mogallāna, the left-hand Chief Disciple of the Buddha, was the foremost in supernormal powr among the Buddha's disciples. He could shake the great Vejayantā mansion of the Sakka with his big toe. He could tame the fierce dragon king, Nando Pananda. Yet he could not escape from being beaten to death by five hundred thieves in his last existence. Why ?

In Rājagraha city five hundred heretics held a meeting.

"Do you know why the monk Gotama is receiving many offerings?" a heretic asked.

As no one gave the answer, that heretic continued his talk, "The reason why Gotama receives many offerings is due to Mahā Mogallāna. He went to celestial abodes and asked celestial beings what meritorious deeds had they done to enjoy great celestial luxuries. What celestial beings said was retold by Mahā Moggallāna to human beings.

"Again he went to woeful abodes and asked woeful ghosts and denizens of hell what unwholesome deeds had they performed to suffer great misery. What the woeful ghosts and denizens of hell answered was retold by Mahā Moggallāna to human beings.

"Therefore, human beings believed in kamma and its results and revere the Buddha more than ever. They also honour him with a lot of offerings. If we can kill Mahā

http://www.dhammadownload.com

Moggallāna all the offerings will come to us. Do you agree to kill Moggallāna?"

All heretics would like to receive the offerings. So they agree to kill Mahā Mogallāna. They collected one thousand silver coins and gave the money to five hundred thieves, asking them to kill Mahā Moggallāna. The thieves, having great passion for the money, accepted the job.

They went to Isigili Hill and surrounded the monastery of Mahā Moggallāna which was located on Kālasīla stone slab. The Mahā Thera knew about this and he easily went out with his supernormal power. But the thieves kept on surrounding the monastery everyday to do the job they had accepted. Everyday the Mahā Thera went out with his supernormal power.

Three months passed by. Mahā Moggallāna pondered over the matter. He could see that his unwholesome weighty kamma which he had acquired for killing his parents in a very far-away past existence was going to bear results again. He could not stop it with his supernormal power and he could not escape from it.

So he didn't try to escape any more. The thieves caught him and beat him with sticks until all his bones were crushed to small pieces. They thought the chief monk was dead. They threw him into the bushes and went away.

The Mahā Thera wound all his body parts tightly with the rope of jhāna and flew to the Buddha through the air. He paid obeisance to the Buddha and said, "Venerable Sir, please allow me to pass away into Nibbāna."

"Where are you going to pass away into Nibbāna?"

http://www.dhammadownload.com

"At the place called Kālasīla".

"My dear son Mogallāna, preach a sermon to me and go to the place you wish to go. This is the last time for me to see you."

Mahā Moggallāna paid respect to the Buddha and flew up to the sky to the height of a palm tree. He came down, paid obeisance to the Buddha and flew up to the height of two palm trees. He repeated this behaviour of paying respect to the Buddha by flying up to the height of three palm trees, four palm trees, five palm trees, six palm trees and seven palm trees. He remained in the sky and displayed various forms of supernormal power. Then he preached a sermon, paid obeisance to the Buddha and left for his dwelling place, Kālasīla. There he passed away into Nibbāna.

No one can escape from the results of kammas!

The Echo One Made Returns to Oneself

Why was Mahā Moggallāna beaten until his bones were crushed to tiny pieces? Why could't his great supernormal power stop it ?

The news that Mahā Moggallāna was beaten to death spread like wild fire all over the Indian continent. The king of Rājagraha, Ajātasattu, sent spies to detect the culprits. The thieves who beat the chief disciple were drinking in an alcohol shop. They got drunk and quarrelled with one another. In the quarrel they thoughtlessly spoke out that they had beaten the chief disciple to death.

King Ajātasattu let the five hundred thieves and the five hundred heretics be arrested, buried up to their chests in the palace compound, covered with straw and burnt alive.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

Then they were cut into pieces by being ploughed with iron ploughs.

How terrible is the relentless operation of the heinous kammas! It is similar to the echo which one made returing to oneself. The immediately effective kammas produced by the heinous crime of the thieves bore results on them in their present lives. How about Mahā Moggallāna? What had he done?

The monks met at the Dhamma Hall and talked about Mahā Mogallāna. They remarked, "Venerable Mahā Moggallāna had to pass away in a manner very inappropriate to him."

The Buddha came and said, "My son Moggallāna passed away in a manner which was appropriate to the kamma he had done." Then he revealed Mahā Moggallāna's past account.

Long long ago, in ancient Bāranasī, a man was looking after his blind parents.

"My son, you have to work both in the forest and in the house. It's very tiring for you. Take a wife to help you," said the parents.

"O mother and father, I don't want to marry. I will look after you myself till you die."

The parents persuaded him to marry many times. Finally they chose a suitable woman to be his wife. After attending to the needs of the blind parents-in-law for a few days, the woman became unwilling to attend to them. She didn't even want to see them.

She told her husband, "My dear, I cannot live together with your parents. Let us live in a separate house".

http://www.dhammadownload.com

She tried to please him in many ways. But the husband didn't listen to her. So she spread the rice porridge all over the house. When the husband came back from the forest, he asked, "Who spread this rice porridge?"

"Who could it be. It's your blind parents who spread the porridge. I cannot live together with them in a house," said the wife.

After the wife acted in this way many times, the man began to believe what his wife said. He was attached to her with lust and so blinded with the darkness of ignorance *(avijjā)*. He began to find fault in his parents whose gratitude upon him was greater than Mount Meru.

One day he put his parents on his bullockcart, telling them that they would visit their relatives in another village. He drove the cart to a forest. In the middle of the forest he altered his voice and shouted as if they were being surrounded by robbers.

The parents said to the son, "My son, you ran away to safety. Don't worry about us. We are very old. It does not matter if we die."

Although the parents expressed their concern and their great love for their son, the man relentlessly beat his parents to death and threw their corpses in the forest. How could a man be blinded by lust and ignorance and became so wicked to kill his parents mercilessly!

Because that man committed a very heinous crime, he was cast down to Avīci hell on his death. He was mercilessly tortured and killed many times for millions of years in Avici hell. When he escaped from that hell, his subse-

http://www.dhammadownload.com

quently effected kammas bore results life after life so that in a hundred existences, he was beaten to death until his bones were crushed into tiny pieces. That man was the future Mahā Miggallāna.

"So my son Moggallāna died in a manner very appropriate to the evil kamma he had done in the past."

At the end of the Buddha's discourse many monks gained Sotāpatti Fruition and higher Fruitions.

(Dhammapada Stories. Vol.3, Mahā Moggallāna Story)

Indefinitely Effective Kammas Follow like One's Shadow

** Mind (conscionsness) is the forerunner of all mental aggregates. Mind is chief; mind-made are they. If one speaks, acts or plans with wicked mind, because of that, misery follows one, even as the wheel follows the hoof of the ox that draws the cart.*

** Mind (consciousness) is the forerunner of all mental aggregates. Mind is chief; mind-mind are they. If one speaks, acts or plans with pure mind, because of that, peace and happiness follow one, even as one's shadow that never leaves. (Dhammapada 1 and 2)*

4 Ahosi Kamma – *Defunct Kamma*

Immediately effective kammas, subsequently effective kammas and indefinitely effective kammas, which do not have the opportunity to bear fruit during their specified

http://www.dhammadownload.com

time-limits, become defunct or ineffective.

A banyan tree bears thousands of fruits in one season and millions of seeds will be left behind. Although each seed has the potential to produce a new plant, only about a hundred or a thousand seeds have the opportunity to produce plants. All the rest become defunct.

In the same way billions of good kammas are acquired during a meritorious action and billions of unwholesome kammas arise during an evil action. So in a life time, the number of wholesome kammas and the number of unwholesome kammas are countless. Only a few of these kammas have the opportunity to bear results. The rest will become defunct kammas.

For example, **Aṅgulimāla** killed many human beings to get one thousand forefingers. When the Buddha admonished him, he threw away the sword and became a bhikkhu. Then he undertook meditation and became an Arahant. As an Arahant will not be reborn again after death, all the wholesome kammas and unwholesome kammas in his mental stream will become defunct kammas.

5 Four Types of Kammas with respect to the Places where the Effects Arise

1 *Akusala kamma* – unwholesome kamma,
2 *Kāmāvacara kusala kamma* – sense-sphere wholesome kamma,
3 *Rūpāvacara kusala kamma* – fine-material-sphere wholesome kamma,
4 *Arūpāvacara kusala kamma* – immaterial-sphere wholesome kamma.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

With respect to the place where the kammic effect takes place, kamma is divided into four classses.

1 Akusala Kamma – *Unwholesome Kamma*

The volitions associated with the twelve types of unwholesome minds and their kamma properties left behind in the mental stream are called unwholesome kammas. They will bear their results, that is, unwholesome resultant consciousnesses, associated mental factors and kamma-born matter, in the four woeful abodes – viz., the animal world, the world of woeful ghosts *(petas)*, the world of demons *(asūrakāyas)* and hell.

2 Kāmāvacara Kusala Kamma – *Sense-sphere Wholesome Kamma*

The volitions associated with the eight sense-sphere wholesome kammas and their kamma properties left behind in the mental stream are known as sense-sphere wholesome kammas. These kammas are formed by billions when alms-giving, observing moral precepts and meditation are performed.

When they bear their results, they will produce the five aggregates consisting of sense-shere resultant consciousnesses, associated mental factors and kamma-born matter, in the seven sensuous blissful planes – viz., the human realm and six deva realms.

3 Rūpāvacara Kusala Kamma – *Fine-material-sphere Wholesome Kammas*

The voltions associated with the five fine-material-sphere wholesome consciousnesses as well as their kamma

http://www.dhammadownload.com

properties left behind in the mental stream are called fine-material-sphere wholesome kammas.

When the first jhāna, the second jhāna, the third jhāna and the fourth jhāha pertaining to the fine-material sphere are developed one after another, billions of fine-material-sphere wholesome kammas are formed.

When they bear results, they will produce the five aggregates consisting of fine-material-shere resultant consciousnesses, their associated mental factors and kamma-born matter in the sixteen fine-material realms.

4 Arūpāvacara Kusala Kamma – *Immaterial-sphere wholesome Kammas*

The volitions associated with the four immaterial-sphere wholesome consciousnesses as well as their kamma properties left behind in the mental stream are known as immaterial-sphere wholesome kammas.

By undertaking kasina meditation, one can develop four fine-material-sphere wholesome consciousnesses and four immaterial-sphere wholesome consciousnesses. When one remains in an immaterial-sphere jhāna attainment, jhāna consciousness arises by billions every second, leaving many billion immaterial-sphere kammas in the mental stream.

When they bear results, they will produce the four mental aggregates consisting of immaterial-sphere resultant consciousnesses and their associated mental factors in the four immaterial realms.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

References

1 *Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, "Abhidhamma" (Higher Level) Vol-1, pp. 135-164.*

2 *Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, "The Essence of Buddha Abhidhamma", pp.196-209.*

3 *"A comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma", Bhikkhu Bodhi, General Editer, Buddhist Publication Society, Sri Lanka, pp. 200-210.*

4 *Nārada Mahā Thera, "The Buddha and His Teachings", pp. 186-221.*

5 *Sayadaw U Sīlānanda, "Volition – An Introduction to the Law of Kamma", Inward Path Publisher, Penang, Malaysia.*

6 *"The Manual of Buddhism", Vol. 1, Religious Affairs Department, in Myanmar Language, pp. 650-686.*

http://www.dhammadownload.com

9

The Mind is the Real Creator

1 The Mind is the Real Almighty Agent

The things that the human mind has created in the world are incredibly wonderful and numerous. Great buildings, sky-scrapers, roads and bridges, motor cars, bullet trains, big ocean liners, computers, setellite communication systems, etc., are even more wonderful than the dream world.

We can see that when a person learns worldly academic knowledge such as arts and sciences, his thinking power and creative power become greater.

Similarly when a person learns to develop the eight jhāna attainments by meditating on a kasiṇa, his mental power becomes highly exalted, accompanied by great bliss. When he attains all the eight jhānas in all the ten kasiṇas, he can practise in fourteen ways described by the Buddha, developing the jhānas in the kasiṇas in many ways. Thereby he can acquire seven kinds of supernormal power which is

http://www.dhammadownload.com

more wonderful and more marvellous than science achievements.

Marvellous Mandane Supernormal Powers

(1) *Iddhividha Abhiññāṇa* – the supernormal power of creating various forms and various feats,

(2) *Dibbacakkhu Abhiññāṇa* – the divine eye which can see the whole world and the thirty-one planes of existence.

(3) *Dibbasota Abhiññāṇa* – the divine ear which can hear all kinds of sound from the whole world including very low voices and very far-away voices,

(4) *Paracittavijānana Abhiññāṇa* – the supernormal power of reading other's minds or thoughts,

(5) *Pubbenivāsānussati Abhiññāṇa* – the supernormal power of recollecting one's many past existences,

(6) *Yathākammūpaga Abhiññāṇa* – the supernormal power of knowing the kamma which gives rise to each being,

(7) *Anāgataṁsa Abhiññāṇa* – the supernormal power of knowing future existences and future worlds.

2 The Amazing Properties of Supernormal Powers

With the power of *Iddhividha*. Abhiññāṇa one can dive in and out of the ground, one can walk or sit on water, one can travel in space and can pass through walls and mountains Being one, he can multiply himself up to a hundred, a thousand, or a million. Having been many, he can

http://www.dhammadownload.com

become one again. He can turn water into ghee or butter. He can make near what is far, and far what is near. He can make much what is little, and little what is much. He can disappear and reappear. He can expose what is hidden, and he can make invisible what is vissible.

Venerable Cūḷapanthaka, when being left alone in the mango-grove monastery, multiplied himself up to one thousand.

The **Royal Dragon Nandopananda** made his body very big and surrounded Mount Meru with seven coils of his body. He then spread his hood over Tāvatiṁsā realm making everything there invisible. He was in fact blocking the path of the Buddha and five hundred Arahants to Tāvatiṁsā.

Venerable Mahā Moggallāna abandoned his natural form and assumed the form of a very big Royal Dragon. He surrounded Nandopananda with fourteen coils of his body and placed his hood over the other's hood, pressing it against Mount Meru.

Nandopananda produced smoke, and the Elder also produced smoke. Nandopananda's smoke did not distress the Elder, but the Elder's smoke distressed Nandopananda.

Then Nandopananda produced flames, and the Elder also produced flames. Only the Elder's flames distressed the Royal Dragon.

"Who are you?" asked Nandopananda.

"I am Mahā-Moggallāna", answered the Elder.

"Venerable sir, resume your original bhikkhu form."

The Elder resumed his fine original form. He went into Nandopanada's right ear and came out from his left

http://www.dhammadownload.com

ear; then he went into his left ear and came out from his right ear. He went into the Royal Dragon's belly through his mouth, and walked up and down inside his belly.

"Venerable sir, please come out," requested the Royal Dragon.

The Elder came out and stood outside. Nando-pananda blew a blast of hot air from his nose. The Elder immediately attained the fourth jhāna and the blast could not move even a hair of his body. Other bhikkhus could not attain the fourth jhāna as rapidly as Mahā-Moggallāna; so they could be scorched to death by the hot blast.

The Royal Dragon ran away. The Elder assumed the form of a Supaṇṇa, and making a loud sound by flapping the wings, he pursued the dragon. Nando-pananda assumed the form of a young man and paid homage to the Elder, saying: "I take refuge in you."

The Elder took him to the Buddha. He paid homage to the Buddha, saying: "Venerable sir, I take refuge in you."

The Blessed One said, "May you be happy, Nando-panada."

Making What is Far Near and What is Large Small

During the period of famine in Sri Lanka, **Venerable Mahā-Anula** saw many bhikkhus sitting on the banks of a river eating plain rice, which was all that they had got after doing their alms round. The Elder resolved: *"Let the river water be cream of ghee"*, and he gave a sign to the novices. The novices fetched the cream of ghee in their bowls and gave it to the bhikkhus. All of them took their meal

http://www.dhammadownload.com

with the cream of ghee.

On the next day seven hundred bhikkhus came to **Venerable Cūḷa-Samudda Thera**. He could see with divine eye that they could get alms food only in Pāṭaliputta in northern India.

He told the bhikkhus to take their bowls and other robes, saying: "Come friends, let us go wandering for alms." Then he abridged the earth (made the distance shorter) and went to Pāṭaliputta.

The bhikkhus asked, "What city is this, venerable sir?"

"It is Pāṭaliputta, friends."

"Pāṭaliputta is far away, sir."

"O friends, some leading Elders could **make what is far near**."

"Where is the ocean, venerable sir?"

"Friends, didn't you cross a blue ditch on the way?"

"Yes, sir, but the ocean is very wide."

"Friends, some old Elders could also **make what is large small**."

Making What is Much Little and What is Little Much

One feast day at Rājagraha, five hundred girls were on their way to enjoy the festival. They took moon cakes with them. They saw the Buddha but gave him nothing. When they saw Venerable Mahā-Kassapa, they all approached him to offer him a moon cake each, thinking: "This is our Elder." The Elder took out his bowl and made a single bowlful of them all.

The Blessed One waited for him, and he offered the cakes to the Buddha.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

One can also make what is little much with Supernormal Power. The Elder Mahā-Kassapa, after spending seven days in Nirodha attainment, stood at the house door of a very poor man Kākavaliya. His wife poured into his bowl the unsalted gruel that she had cooked for the two of them. The Elder offered that gruel to the Buddha. The Exalted One resolved to make the gruel just enough for the Community of Bhikkhus. On account of this remarkable offering Kākavaliya became a rich man on the seventh day.

Turning Darkness into Light and Revelation of Worlds

The possessor of supernormal power can turn darkness into light, can reveal what is covered by doors and walls, can make evident what is too far or too subtle as if placing a ruby on the palm.

Being invited by Cūḷa-Subhaddā, the daughter of Anāthapiṇḍika, the Buddha traversed the seven-league (56 miles) journey between Sāvatthi and Sāketa. He made the resolution so that the citizens of Sāketa saw the inhabitants of Sāvatthi and vice versa. After he had alighted in the centre of the city, he split the earth in two and showed Avīci, and he parted the sky in two and showed the Brahmā World.

Again, having delivered the Abhidhamma discourse for three months during the Buddhist lent in Tāvatiṁsā, the Buddha stood at the summit of Mount Meru and performed the **Revelation of Worlds** *(Loka-vivaraṇa),* that is, the demonstration of supernormal power of opening up millions of worlds of location *(okāsa-loka)* and the worlds of

http://www.dhammadownload.com

living beings *(satta-loka)* to be seen vividly by human beings and deities alike.

Human beings saw deities, and deities saw human beings. And in doing so the human beings did not have to look up and the deities did not have to look down. They all saw each other face to face.

For the Buddha to descend from Tāvatiṁsā realm which is at the top of Mount Meru to the human realm, Vissakamma deity created three flights of stairs. The Blessed One descended by the middle flight of stairs made of ruby; the deities of the six sense-sphere heavens by the left-side flight of stairs made of gold; and the deities of the pure Abodes as well as the Mahā Brahmā by the right-side flight of stairs made of silver.

The Sakka held the alms bowl and the robe of the Buddha. The Mahā Brahmā held a three-league-wide parasol. King Suyāma held a yak-tail-fan. Pañcasikha, a Gandhabba deity, descended doing honour to the Buddha with his Beluvapaṇḍu harp measuring three quarters of a league.

On that day there was no living being present who saw the Buddha and did not want to become a Buddha. This is the miracle of becoming clear and evident *(Āvibhāva Prāṭihā)* that the Blessed One performed.

\+ + +

Another person who could demonstrate this miracle of opening up the hidden and making visible what is invisible was the **Elder Dhammadinna,** who resided at Vālaṅkāra place, Sri Laṅka. He sat on the shrine terrace

http://www.dhammadownload.com

in Tissa Mahāvihāra, expounding the Apaṇṇaka Sutta. He turned his fan downwards when everything up to Avīci was open up and became evident as clearly as a single plane. When he turned his fan upwards everything up to the Brahmā world was open up and became evident as clearly as a single plane.

Having thus aroused the fear of hell and the longing for the bliss of heaven, the Elder taught the Dhamma. Some became Stream Enterers, some Once-returners, some Non-returners.

+ + +

Furthermore, the possessor of supernormal power may turn light into darkness, or he may cause what is unhidden to be hidden, or what is visible to be invisible. This supernormal power is called *'Tirobhāva Prāṭihā'*.

While the Buddha was residing in Isipatana forest, he made **Yasa** who was sitting beside him invisible to Yasa's father.

Likewise, after the Buddha had travelled 120 leagues to meet **King Mahā-kappina** and established him in the Fruition of Non-return and his one thousand ministers in the Fruition of Stream Entry, he so acted that **Queen Anojā**, who had followed the king with a thousand women attendants and was sitting nearby, did not see the king and his retinue.

She asked the Buddha, "Have you seen the king, Venerable Sir?"

The Buddha replied by asking her, "Which is better for you, to seek the king or to seek yourself?"

http://www.dhammadownload.com

"To seek oneself is more better, Sir."

Then he taught her the Dhamma. At the end of the teaching, she and her retinue of one thousand women attendants became established in the Fruition of Stream Entry, while the ministers reached the Fruition of Non-return, and the king that of Arahantship.

(AA. 1, 322; DhA. ii, 124)

The marvellous accounts of supernormal powers are so numerous that they cannot be described fully here. Interested readers can read about them in Visuddhi Magga, Iddhividha Niddesa and Abhiññāṇa Niddesa.

The Creative Power of the Mind through Kamma

The creative power of the mind through kamma is more marvellous than supernormal powers as kammas create all living beings in the universe. If one can accept the supernormal powers of the mind, one can also accept the creative power of the mind through kamma. In reality, as the Buddha Dhamma describes the natural truths, it is rational and scientific. If one practises the Dhamma oneself, one can see the truth of the Dhamma by one's direct knowledge.

3 The Way Akusala Kamma Bears Results

Abhidhammaṭṭha Saṅgaha (Abhidhammā Summary) describes the properties of kammas exactly. When one performs an immoral action on account of craving for something and attachment to it, greed-rooted immoral minds arise by billions. If one performs an immoral action because of anger or illwill, anger-rooted immoral minds arise by bil-

http://www.dhammadownload.com

lions. When these immoral minds perish, they leave behind billions of immoral or unwholesome kammas in the mental stream.

When these immoral kammas play the role of productive kammas to condition new existences to arise, they generate immoral resultant consciousness, associated mental factors and kamma-born matter which form a new being in a woeful abode. So long as a kamma remains active, it will generate its resultant consciousness one after another for the whole life. The first resultant consciousness produces rebirth or pregnancy; so it is called **rebirth-consciousness.** Subsequent resultant consciousnesses keep the new being alive; so it is called **life-continuum** *(bhavaṅga cittas).* The last resultant consciousness performs death function; so it is called **death consciousness** *(cuti citta).*

As soon as a resultant consciousness arises, its associated mental factors also arise simultaneously. Kamma-born matter is produced every short moment starting from the arising moment of rebirth consciousness. The life-span of a consciousness is called a **consciousness moment** *(cittakkhaṇa)* which is equal to three short moments—viz, the arising moment, the existing moment and the perishing moment of a consciousness.

As each resultant consciousness, its associated mental factors and kamma-born matter constitutes five aggregates of existence, they act as the main cause for producing and maintaining a new existence.

Furthermore, when an immoral kamma bears results, it produces the existence of a woeful ghost if greed (crav-

http://www.dhammadownload.com

ing or attachment) is prominent, or the existence of the denizen of hell if anger or illwill is prominent, or the existence of an animal if ignorance is prominent. Demons have bigger bodies than woeful ghosts and they suffer greater misery. Woeful ghosts and demons can be regarded to belong to the same category.

Since all woeful existences begin rebirth with unwholesome resultant consciousness and remain alive with unwholesome resultant consciousnesses which contain no wisdom, we can understand why their intelligence is low and misery abounds in them. So we should sympathize with them and have compassion on them.

4 Two-rooted Meritorious Deed and Three-rooted Meritorious Deed

When a meritorious deed such as alms giving *(dāna)*, observing moral precepts *(sīla)* and undertaking meditation *(bhāvanā)* is performed, billions of sense-sphere wholesome minds arise and perish, leaving behind in the mental stream billions of sense-sphere wholesome kammas.

When the meritorious deed is performed without the knowledge of kamma and its result, the sense-sphere wholesome mind is not accompanied by wisdom *(amoha)* ; so it contains only two roots – viz., greedlessness *(alobha)* and hatelessness *(adosa)*. So the mind is called *'two-rooted mind'* and the deed is denoted as *'two-rooted meritorious deed.'* The kamma formed is called *'two-rooted wholesome kamma.'*

When the meritorious deed is performed with the knowledge of kamma and its results, the sense-sphere

http://www.dhammadownload.com

wholesome mind is accompanied with wisdom and it is called *'three rooted mind'*. having greedlessness, hatelessness and wisdom as roots. The deed is denoted as *'three-rooted meritorious deed.* The kamma formed is called *'three-rooted wholesome kamma'.*

5 Inferior Kamma and Superior Kamma

In performing a meritorious deed it is also important to develop threefold wholesome volition. Before performing the meritorious deed one must know the benefits of the deed and should feel joyful and willing to perform the meritorious deed. This is *'good prior volition' (pubbacetanā).*

While one is performing the meritorious deed, one should feel joyful and enthusiastic, knowing kamma and its result. This is *'good present volition' (muñcacetanā).*

After performing the meritorious deed, again one should feel happy and satisfactory for having done the good deed. He should also feel glad recalling the meritorious deed. This is *'good post volition' (apara cetanā).*

If the meritorious deed is performed with such threefold good volitious, it is called *'superior meritorious deed'* and the kamma formed is called *'Superior wholesome kamma.'*

If the meritorious deed is performed without such threefold good volitions, it is known as *'inferior meritorious deed'* and the kamma formed is called *'inferior wholesome kamma.'*

Superior wholesome kamma will be better and bear greater fruits than inferior wholesome kamma. So even though two persons make similar donation, the merit they

http://www.dhammadownload.com

attain are not the same. The one who donates with stronger and more enthusiastic volition which is surrounded by good volitions will acquire superior wholesome kamma and enjoy greater fruits than the other.

One should not long for royal luxury or celestial luxury as the results of one's good deed. Longing for wealth or luxury is greed-rooted mind. If unwholesome minds and volitions surround 'present volitions', inferior kamma is formed.

Thus one should perform meritorious deeds with the knowledge of kamma and with threefold wholesome volition.

Great Meritorious Deed with little Benefit

During the reign of King Ba-gyi-daw, Queen Nan-ma-daw Mai Nu donated a great, grand monastery to a very learned monk called Nyaung Gan Sayadaw U Bode. The cost of the monastery was four lakh kyats – a very large sum at that time. She also donated other requisites – alms-food, robes, medicine and furniture – in sufficient amounts.

Then she asked the Sayadaw, that is, chief monk, how great the benefits of her offerings would be. The chief monk asked her to fetch water in a silver bowl and to pour that bowlful of water to the ground.

"Dear devotee, the money you spent for offering the great monastery and other requisites is like the water you poured to the ground and the benefits you gain are like the little water remaining in the bowl," said the chief monk.

The queen was not satisfied with that answer. She

http://www.dhammadownload.com

went to Sagaing Hills and told the head monk Taung Balu Sayadaw about her question and Nyaung Gan Sayadaw U Bode's answer. The great monk Taung Balu Sayadaw made the remark, "I thought that there is a wise, learned monk in the south in the name of U Bode. But now U Bode showed favour to the queen."

This remark is very notable. The queen Nan-ma-daw Mai Nu was conceited thinking that she could donate a grand monastery which could not be donated by others. She was also developing greed-rooted minds by craving for great human luxury and great celestial luxury as the benefits of her great donation. Thus her *'present volition' (muñca-cetanā)* for offering the grand monastery was surrounded by conceit, geed and wrong view. So her great meritorious deed became inferior, bearing just little fruit.

In performing a meritorious deed it is best to keep one's mind free from greed, stinginess and selfishness and give away freely without any attachment. One should also make an earnest wish, *"Idhaṁ may puññaṁ Nibbānassa paccayo hotu"* or *"May this meritorious deed of mine lead me to the realization of Nibbāna"*.

6 Three Kinds of Human Beings

Human beings are not created equal by an Almighty God. In fact, kammas create men to be different from one another. Due to the creative power of sense-sphere wholesome kammas, human beings, sense-sphere celestial beings, human luxuries and celestial luxuries come into existence. In performing the meritorious deed, if one wishes for a human existence, one will become a human being; if

http://www.dhammadownload.com

one wishes for a celestial existence, one shall become a celestial being.

Men also differ from one another in appearance, qualities, health, wealth, etc., due to the division by the different kammas they have acquired as described in *Cūḷa-Kamma Vibhaṅga Sutta* by the Buddha.

Besides there are three kinds of human beings according to Abhidhamma – viz., *rootless persons, two-rooted persons* and *three-rooted persons.*

If a meritorious deed is performed without the knowledge of kamma and its result and also without threefold wholesome volitions, **two-rooted inferior kammas** are formed. When these kammas play the role of productive kammas, they generate rootless wholesome resultant consciousnesses, associated mental factors and kamma-born matter. Rootless wholesome resultant consciousness contains no wholesome roots. Human beings as well as some earth-bound deities who are born with rootless wholesome resultant consciousnesses are called **'rootless persons'** *(ahetuka puggala).*

Rootlesss persons have the lowest intelligence among human beings as well as among earth-bound deities. Those degraded human beings who are born blind, deaf, dumb, retarded or deformed as well as some earth-bound, low, tiny, fallen asuras or ghosts and goblins are rootless persons.

Again if a meritorious deed is performed without the knowledge of kamma and its result but with threefold wholesome volitions **two-rooted superior kammas** are formed. On the other hand, if the meritorious deed is per-

http://www.dhammadownload.com

formed with the knowledge of kamma and its result but without threefold wholesome volitions, **three-rooted inferior kammas** are formed. When these two types of kammas play the role of productive kammas, they generate two-rooted wholesome resultant consciousnesses, associated mental factors and kamma-born matter.

Human beings as well as sense-sphere celestial beings who are born with two-rooted wholesome resultant consciousnesses are called **'two-rooted persons'** *(dvihetuka puggala)*. These beings do not have wisdom in their rebirth consciousness and life-continuum. Though they have complete normal body parts, they have dull wisdom and they cannot attain jhāna, magga and phala however much do they try in the present existence.

Again if a meritorious deed is performed with the knowledge of kamma and its result as well as with threefuld wholesome volitions, **three-rooted superior kammas** are formed. When these kammas play the role of productive kammas, they generate three-rooted wholesome resultant consciousness, associated mental factors, and kamma-born matter.

Human beings as well as sense-sphere celestial beings who are born with three-rooted wholesome resultant consciousness are called **'three-rooted persons'** *(tihetuka puggala)*. These beings have wisdom, greedlessness and hatelessness *(amoha, alobha, adosa)* as three roots in their rebirth consciousness and life-continuum. They have bright wisdom and they can attain jhāna, magga and phala if they undertake the Noble Threefold Training strenuously.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

Thus even though human beings have similar features, their rebirth consciousnesses as well as their life-continuum consciousnesses are different.

7 Differentiation of Rūpa Brahmās

Since brahmās possess great power, some people even think that they are creators who create the world and living beings. Who created these brahmās? Who differentiate the fine-material brahmā realms into sixteen separate realms? It is the mind which creates all the brahmās and the brahmā realms through kamma.

The mind can be made to be exalted step by step. The minds which are more exalted than sense-sphere minds are the fine-material sphere minds or jhāna minds. By undertaking meditation on mindfulness of breathing or earth-kasiṇa, water-kasiṇa, etc., one can develop four levels of fine-material wholesome consciousness or jhāna consciousness.

'Jhāna' is the state of meditative absorption in which the mind remains fixed on the meditation sign for hours. It is the concentrated, unshaken, undefiled and peaceful state of mind. The first jhāna is a combination of five jhāna factors which are neutral mental factors that associate with both wholesome minds and unwholesome minds. They are as follows.

(1) *Vitakka* – initial application that applies the mind onto the sense object.

(2) *Vicāra* – sustained application that keeps on applying the mind onto the sense object again and again;

http://www.dhammadownload.com

(3) *Pīti* – joy or pleasurable interest in the sense object;

(4) *Sukha* – pleasant feeling as well as the pleasant enjoyment of the sense object;

(5) *Ekaggatā* – one-pointedness of the mind or concentration.

In meditation such as mindfulness of breathing, sense-sphere wholesome consciousnesses arise and these jhāna factors are slowly developed. When they are fully developed, they become very strong and keep the mind focused at a point on the meditation object. Thus the state of one-pointedness of the mind, that is first rūpāvacara jhāna, is established. *'Rūpāvacara" means 'fine material sphere'.*

Then by undertaking meditation further and eliminating vitakka and vicāra, the **second rūpāvacara jhāna** can be developed. The second jhāna contains only three jhāna factors – viz., pīti, sukha, ekaggatā.

Then by undertaking meditation further and eliminating *pīti,* the **third rūpāvacara jhāna** can be attained. The third jhāna contains only two jhāna factors – viz., *sukha* and *ekaggata.* As *sukha* is very strong, this jhāna is very blissful. In fact it is the highest worldly bliss.

Then by undertaking meditation further and eliminating *sukha,* the **fourth rūpāvacara jhāna** can be attained. The fourth jhāna also contains two jhāna factors –viz., *upekkhā* and *ekaggatā. Upekkhā* is neutral feeling accompanied by strong equanimity. So the fourth jhāna is very calm, peaceful, and well established on the meditation object.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

At the jhāna state the mind is free from all defilements *(kilesās)*. So the mind is pure, calm, peaceful and very powerful. The jhāna bliss is much superior than sensual pleasure.

When the mind is pure and concentrated, it radiates very bright and penetrative light in accordance with **Pacalāyamāna Sutta.** The higher the concentration, the brighter the light. With the help of this bright, penetrative light, one can see with closed eyes all objects around oneself as well as objects that are far away. These objects are observed by the mind-eye associated with concentration. One can also see penetratively into the body to observe internal organs such as the flesh, the bones, the lungs, the heart, the liver, etc. If one practises well, one can also penetratively and vividly see the ultimate realities, that is, consciousness *(citta)*, mental factors *(cetasikas)* and ultimate materiality *(rūpas)*. So one can practise **insight meditation** *(vipassanā)* properly.

When one develops *jhāna attainment (jhāna samāpatti)*, that is remaining at the absorption state for one hour, two hours, etc., jhāna minds arise continuously at the rate of more than a trillion per second, thus leaving behind many billions of rūpāvacara wholesome kammas in the mental stream. Jhāna kammas are strong weighty kammas *(garuka kammas)*.

(1) With regard to rūpāvacara wholesome kammas, the *rūpāvacarakusala first jhāna,* if developed to an inferior degree, gives birth in the *Brahmapārisajjā* heaven; if developed to a medium degree, gives birth in the *Brahmapurohitā* heaven; and if developed to a superior degree,

http://www.dhammadownload.com

gives birth in the *mahābrahmā* heaven. So the first rūpāvacara wholesome jhāna gives rise to three first jhāna brahmā realms together with their inhabitants through its kamma property.

(2) Similarly, the *rūpāvacarakusala second jhāna,* if developed to an inferior degree, gives birth in the *Parittābhā* heaven; if developed to a medium degree, gives birth in the *Appamānābhā* heaven; and if developed to a superior degree, gives birth in the *Ābhassarā* heaven. So the second rūpavacara wholesome jhāna also gives rise to three second jhāna brahmā realms together with their inhabitants.

(3) Again the *rūpāvacarakusala third jhāna,* if developed to an inferior degree, gives birth in the *Parittasubhā* heaven; if developed to a medium degree, gives, birth in the *Appamānasubhā* heaven; and if developed to a suprior degree, gives birth in the *Subhakinhā* heaven. So the third rūpāvacara wholesome jhāna also gives rise to three third jhāna brahmā realms together with their inhabitants.

(4) The *rūpāvacarakusala fourth jhāna,* if it is developed, gives birth in *vehapphalā* heaven. After attaining the fourth jhāna, if one develops disgust against perception, one will be reborn in *Asaññasatta* heaven. *Asaññasatta* brahmās have only material body without perception and other mental entities. Moreover, non-returners with the fourth rūpāvacara jhāna will be reborn in five *Suddhāvāsā* heavens, depending on the predominant factor of the five faculties *(Indriya)* – viz., faith *(sāddhā),* effort *(viriya),* mindfulness *(sati),* concentration *(samādhi)*

http://www.dhammadownload.com

and wisdom *(paññā)*. So the fourth rūpāvacara wholesome jhāna gives rise to seven fourth jhāna realms together with their inhabitants.

Three first jhāna realms, three second jhāna realms, three third jhāna realms, and seven fourth jhāna realms make up sixteen fine material brahmā realms. These realms and their inhabitants are obviously created by the mind through its kamma properties.

As rūpāvacara-kusala kammas are more powerful than kāmāvacara-kusala kammas, fine-materrial sphere brahmās are more powerful than human beings and sense sphere deities and they enjoy very long life measured in world cycles.

8 Arūpa Brahmās with only Mental Entities

The person who has attained four rūpāvacara jhānas can further develop arūpāvacara jhānas. He has to reason first about the unsatisfactory nature of the physical body and the miseries it develops on account of heat and cold, insect bites, hunger, thirst, diseases, ageing and death.

Then he develops the fourth rūpāvasara jhāna by reflecting on an earth kasiṇa, emerges from the jhāna and reflects on the faults of the physical body and matter. Seeing the faults in matter, he neglects the counter sign connected with the earth kasiṇa and concentrates on the infinite space *(ākāsa)*, reflecting *"ākāsa, ākāsa"* or *"space, space"* repeatedly.

When his mild attachment to the counter sign disappears, the counter sign also disappears, unfolding infinite space. Concentrating his attention on the infinite space, he

... http://www.dhammadownload.com

keeps on meditating *"ākāsa, ākāsa"* or *"space, space"* until his meditating mind remains absorbed in the infinite space for one hour, two hours or more. He now attains the first **arūpa** jhāna called *ākāsānañcāyatana jhāna.*

He can develop the second arūpa jhāna by reflecting on ākāsānañcāyatana jhāna mind as *"viññāṇa, viññāṇa"* or "consciousness, consciousness". The second arūpa jhāna is called *viññānañcāyatana jhāna.*

He then focuses his attention on the emptiness caused by the disappearance of ākāsānañcāyatana jhāna, reflecting *"natthi kiñci"* (there is nothing whatsoever) repeatedly until he reaches absorption. This absorption or jhāna is called *ākiñcaññāyatana jhāna.*

Again focusing his attention on ākiñcaññāyatana jhāna, he can continue his meditation to develop the fourth arūpa jhāna called *nevasaññā-nāsaññā-yatana jhāna. "Nevasaññā-nāsaññā"* literally means 'perception neither exists nor does not exist.' This jhāna is so subtle that even the existence of this jhāna mind is not distinct.

By developing each jhāna attainment a meditator can live blissfully for hours. During this time billions of jhāna minds arise and perish, leaving behind many billions of *arūpāvacara kusala kammas* (immaterial wholesome kammas).

At the time of death these kammas can take the role of productive kammas, generating their results consisting of only mental aggregates. The material aggregate does not arise because the faults of matter has been discerned and matter has been abandoned.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

(1) *Ākāsānañcāyatana kusala kamma* gives birth in *Ākāsānañcāyatana realm* with *ākāsānañcāyatana* resultant consciousness functioning as rebirth consciousness, life-continuum and death consciousness.

(2) *Viññānañcāyatana kusula kamma* gives birth in *Viññānañcāyatana realm* with *viññānañcāyatana* resultant consciousness functioning as rebirth consciousness, life-continuum and death consciousness.

(3) *Ākiñcaññāyatana kusala kamma* gives birth in *Ākiñcaññāyatana realm* with *ākiñcaññāyatana* resultant consciousness functioning as rebirth consciousness, life-continuum and death consciousness.

(4) *Nevasaññā-nāsaññāyatana kusala kamma* gives birth in *Nevasaññā-nāsaññāyatana realm* with *nevasaññā-nāsaññā-yatana* resultant consciousness functioning as rebirth consciousness, life-continuum and death consciousness.

Since *arūpāvacara* (immaterial) wholesome kammas are more powerful than rūpāvacara (fine material) wholesome kammas, arūpa brahmās have longer life-span than rūpa brahmās. Their life-spans are 20000, 40000, 60000 and 84000 world cycles respectively for the four immaterial *(arūpa)* realms.

Thus all the thirty-one planes of existence and their inhabitants are naturally created by the mind through its kamma property. The fate and fortune of each individual is also determined by his mind through his actions and his kammas.

What we are is the results of our past actions and our kammas and what we shall be

http://www.dhammadownload.com

will be the results of our present actions and our kammas.

References

1 *Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, "Samatha" (Advanced Level) Vol.II. pp. 88-159.*

2 *"Visuddhi Magga" by Bhaddatācariya Buddhagho-sa. translated into Myanmar by Ven. Nandamālā, Vol, II, pp.185-315.*

3 *"The Path of Purification" (Visuddhi Magga by Bhaddantācariya Buddhaghosa). translated into English By Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli. pp.409-478.*

4 *Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, "Abhidhamma" (Higher Level) vol. I, pp. 164-175.*

5 *Bhikkhu Bodhi, General Editor, "A comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma", pp. 210-219.*

6 *Dr. Mehm Tin Mn, "The Essence of Buddha Abhidhamma", pp. 210-216.*

http://www.dhammadownload.com

10

Death and Rebirth

1 Why are Living Beings Alive ?

"Sabbe sattā āhāra ṭhitikā"

All living beings depend on nutriments for being alive.

'Āhāra' in Pāḷi means 'nutriment' or 'sustenance'. It is that which sustains its result by acting as a strong supporting condition.

According to Abhidhammā there are four types of nutriment that sustain all living beings to be alive.

(1) *Kabaḷīkārāhāra* – nutriment present in edible food *(ojā-rūpa)*

This nutriment produces nutriment-born material groups *(ahāraja rūpa kalāpas)* continuously which sustains the physical body to remain alive.

(2) *Phassāhāra* – contact or sense impression

It is the mental factor *'phassa'* or *'con-*

http://www.dhammadownload.com

tact' which associates with all consciousness. It makes the contact between the mind and the sense object producing and sustaining five types of feeling *(vedanā)*. Pleasant bodily feeling and pleasant mental feeling are important factors that keep living beings alive with great expectation.

(3) *Manosañcetanāhāra* – mental volition or kamma

It is the mental factor *'cetanā'* or *'volition'* which associates with all consciousness. It is responsible for accomplishing each volitional action and consequently it is called kamma. After it dissolves, its potential property left behind in the mental stream is also called kamma.

Wholesome kammas and unwholesome kammas produce their effects continuously in the form of their resultant consciousness, associated mental factors and kamma-born matter. These continuous streams of mental entities and material entities keep living beings alive. Among mental factors *'jīvitindriya'* or *'mental life'* is present. In kamma-born matter, *'jīvita rūpa'* or *'physical life'* is present. The continuous production of 'mental life' and 'physical life' keeps living beings alive. When 'mental life' and 'physical life' are cut off, living beings die.

(4) *Viññāṇāhāra* – all consciousness or all minds

When a consciousness arises, its associated mental factors including *'mental life'* and mind-born matter *(cittajarūpa)* arise simultaneously. Because of the continuous arising of

http://www.dhammadownload.com

consciousness or the mental stream, living beings are alive. Also because of the continuous arising of mind-born matter, living beings can move their hands, their legs, their mouths, etc., and remain alive.

Among the four nutriments, mental volition or kamma is most important. As soon as the productive kamma that conditions the present existence to arise is exhausted and it stops producing its resultant consciousness, associated mental factors and kamma-born matter, a living being dies immediately.

2 Why do Living Beings have to Die?

What is death? Death is the extinction of mental life *(jīvitindriya)*, physical life (jīvita rūpa), consciousness (viññāṇa) and heat *(usma tejo)* in one existence.

Why do living beings have to die ? There are four causes which explain why living beings have to die.

(1) *Āyukkhaya-maraṇa* – death due to the expiration of the age-limit;

(2) *Kammakkhaya-maraṇa* – death due to the expiration of the productive kammic-force;

(3) *Ubhayakkhaya-maraṇa*– death due to the expiration of both the age-limit and the productive kamma;

(4) *Upacchedaka-maraṇa* – death due to the intervention of destructive kamma. It is sudden death such as the death due to car-accident or suicide.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

The fourfold arrival of death may be compared to the four ways of extinguishing a lighted oil lamp.

The flame of an oil lamp may die out when:

(1) the wick burns out,
(2) the oil burns out,
(3) both the wick or the oil burn out, or
(4) the wind blows suddenly or the light is put out purposely even though the wick and the oil still remain.

Just as the flame dies out when the wick burns out, so too some living beings die due to the expiration of the age-limit. The present human age-limit is regarded to be 75 years. A person may die because he is 75 years old.

Just as the flame dies out when the oil burns out, so too some living beings die due to the expiration of the productive kammic force. Some have weak productive kamma; so they will die young. Those with strong productive kammas will live long.

Just as the flame dies out when both the wick and the oil burn out, so too some living beings die due to the expiration of both the age-limit and the productive kamma.

But some beings die without the expiration of both the age-limit and the productive kamma due to the intervention of destructive kammas performed by the beings in the past. They may die due to their own doing such as suicide or by other's doing such as murder or car-accident or by the infliction of diseases. It is similar to the expiration of the burning flame due to a sudden gush of wind or due to the fact that it is purposely put out.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

3 How do Signs Appear just before Death?

When the productive kamma that generates and sustains the present existence is about to be exhausted, that is, when the being is about to die, the many billions of wholesome kammas and unwholesome kammas in his mental stream compete with one another in order to get the role of producing the next existence. It is just like the many cattle kept in a large compound for the night compete with one another in the morning in order to come out of the gate first.

Of the many kammas the one that gets the chance to play the role of productive kamma for the next existence appears at the mind door of the being. It is called the **kamma object.** Or the scene that he has seen or the sound that he has heard while he performed that successful kamma may appear at the respective sense doors (eye door or ear door). This sign is called **kamma nimitta** or the *sign of kamma.* Or the scenes connected with the place where the next rebirth will take place appears at the respective sense door. This sign is called the **sign of destiny.**

Three Types of Near-death Signs

(1) *Kamma* – the wholesome or unwholesome kamma which was performed in the past and that will produce the immediately following rebirth,

For example, the mind and volition which arose during the time of performing the meritorious deed or the immoral action appeared in the mind door. The dying person will experience the same type of mind as he had experi-

http://www.dhammadownload.com

enced during the time of performing the action. In other words, he recalls the past action.

(2) *Kamma-nimitta* – the sign of kamma, that is, the scene, the sound, the smell, the gun, the knife, etc., which were or are observed or used during the performance of the kamma that is going to bear results.

For example, if the kamma was offering flowers to the Buddha, he will see the Buddha statue and flowers as kamma namitta.

If the kamma was teaching a group of students, he will see the students, the books and the class-room as kamma nimitta.

If the kamma was killing a fish, he will see the fish cut in two parts and the knife smeared with blood as kamma nimitta.

(3) *Gati-nimitta* – the sign of destiny, that is the scenes connected with the place of the next rebirth.

For example, if the wholesome kamma will generate a human existence, the dying person may see the womb of his future mother as a red woolen rug or houses and human beings.

If the good kamma will produce a celestial existence, the dying person may see celestial mansion and celestial beings.

If the kamma is unwholesome and it will generate a new existence in hell, the dying person may see hell fires, cauldron filled with molten metal, hell dogs and the king of hell.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

The Near-death Sign may Change

Venerable Soṇa Thera resided on Soṇa Giri Hill in Sri Lanka. Due to his strenuous effort in undertaking the Noble Threefold Training, he became an Arahant. His father was a hunter for life. He became a monk only when he was too old to hunt. So he fell ill and was laid in bed. He saw fierce hell dogs crawling up the mountain to bite him. He told his son to drive away the fierce dogs. His son knew that his father was seeing hell dogs as the sign of destiny.

Soṇa Thera asked novices to gather flowers and spread them on the platform of the pagoda on the hill. They carried the old monk together with his couch to the pagoda.

Soṇa Thera said, "Dear father, pay homage to the pagoda. Flowers are offered to the pagoda on your behalf. Take delight in offering the flowers to the pagoda."

The old monk paid homage to the pagoda. He also took delight in offering flowers to the Buddha. This wholesome kamma became near-death kamma and it had the chance to generate the next existence.

The old monk saw female celestial beings. His sign of destiny had changed. He was now going to be reborn in a celestial realm.

He told his son, "My son, very beautiful step mothers of yours are calling me. Should I go with them?"

"Yes, you should go with them."

The old monk passed away and was reborn as a celestial being.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

Celestial Chariots Arrived just before Death

During the time of Gotama Buddha **Dhammika Upasakā** was the leader of five hundred Buddhist lay devotees in Sāvatthi. Each of these 500 lay devotees again led other 500 devotees. So Dhammika was the leader of 250000 lay devotees. They always performed meritorious deeds such as alms giving, observing moral precepts and practising meditation.

Dhammika became old and sick and was laid in bed. He invited eight monks to his house and listened to their recitation of *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Pāḷi.* At that moment six celestial chariots arrived at his house and each charioteer invited him to get into his chariot, saying that he will take him to the celestial abode.

As Dhammika could see the celestial chariots and the celestial beings and hear what they said, he raised his hand and asked them to stop inviting him and wait. The monks thought that he stopped them. So they stopped their recitation and went back to their monastery.

Dhammika's sons and daughters lamented for their father, saying "Our father was never satisfied to listen to the Buddha's sermon before. Now he stopped the monks recitating the Buddha's words. There is no one who is not afraid of death." And they wept.

Dhammika regained his consciousness and asked his sons and daughters, "Why are you crying? Where are the monks?"

"Daddy stopped them; so they went back to their monastery. We thought that there is no one who is not

http://www.dhammadownload.com

afraid of death. So we cried."

"I did not stop the monks. Six celestial chariots from six celestial realms arrived here and the charioteers are inviting me to go with them. I stopped them from inviting me."

Thinking that their father was talking ramblingly, the sons and daughters wept again.

"Why do you weep again?"

"Daddy, you said that the celestial chariots have arrived; where are they? We cannot see them?"

"Do you have a garland of flowers?"

"Yes, we have."

"Which celestial realm is most pleasant?"

"The Bodhisattas enjoy in Tusitā realm."

"If it is so, you make a resolution: 'Let this garland of flowers hang on the chariot from Tusitā realm' and throw the garland upwards."

They did as they were told. The garland of flowers was hanging in the air (on the chariot from Tusitā realm). It did not fall down. The sons and daughters were delighted to see the miracle.

"I shall go to Tusitā realm. Don't worry about me and don't weep any more. If you want to be like me, you perform meritorious deeds constantly like me."

Dhammikā passed away. He was instantly reborn in a large mansion in Tusitā realm with one thousand female celestial attendants.

4 How does the new Existence Arise after Death

Some say that when a person dies the soul or spirit

http://www.dhammadownload.com

comes out from the dead body and roams about for seven days. Then it enters a new body or goes to the next existence. Is is correct? No, it is not correct.

Is there an intermediate existence after death and before the new existence arises? No, that is not true.

In that case how does the new existence arise? How does a person pass from this existence to a new existence?

Abhidhamma explains this matter very naturally without postulating the existence of any soul, spirit, jīva or atta.

A person ususally dies after the appearance of the near-death sign. The near-death sign of kamma or past kamma-nimitta appears at the mind door. Present kamma-nimitta or near-by sign of destiny appears in anyone of the six sense doors.

For example, a person dies while he is having reverence for a Buddha statue. If that wholesome kamma of revering the Buddha statue plays the role of generating the next existence, then the Buddha statue is the present kamma-nimitta.

If a person dies while he is listening to a sermon, the voice of the sermon is the present kamma-nimitta. The reason Dhammika saw the celestial chariots is that the sign of destiny appeared near him.

(1) If the person dies after the present kamma-nimitta or the near sign of destiny appeared in the eye-door, the near-death cognitive series of consciousness *(maraṇā-sanna vīthi)* arises as follows.

"Tī-Na-Da-Pa-Ca-Sam-St-Vo-Ja-Ja-Ja-Ja-Ja-Td-Td-

http://www.dhammadownload.com

Bh-Cu-Paṭi-Bh-Bh-"

Ti - *Atitabhavaṅga* – past life-contiuum
It is the life continuum which passes by after the visible object strikes the eye-door and before the object appeared at the eye-door.

Na - *Bhavaṅga-calana* – vibrating life-continuum

Da - *Bhavaṅgu-paccheda* – arrested life-continuum.
The bhavaṅga stream is cut off after this mind.

Pa - *Pañcadvārāvajjana* – five-door directing consciousness
It takes notice of the sense object and directs the mental stream towards it.

Ca - *Cakkhu-viññāṇa* – eye consciousness
It sees the sense object and transmits the impression of the sense object to the next arising mind.

Saṁ-*Saṁpaṭicchana* – receiving consciousness
It receives the impression of the visible object.

St - *Santiraṇa* – investigating consciousness
It investigates the sense impression to see whether the sense object is good or bad.

Vo - *Voṭṭhapana* – determining consciousness
It determines whether the sense object is good or bad.

Ja - *Javana citta* – impulsive consciousness
It enjoys the taste of the sense object.

Td - *Tadālambana* – registering consciousness
It continues enjoying the taste of the sense object.

Bh- *Bhavaṅga* – life-continuum
It marks the end of the near-death congnitive series.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

Cu - *Cutti citta* – death consciousness
The person dies when death consciousness perishes.

Paṭi -*Paṭisandhi citta* – rebirth consciousness
A new existence begins at the arising moment of this mind.

Bh - *Bhavaṅga citta* – life continuum flows on.

The above congnitive process is for a very distinct near-death object striking the eye-door. If the near-death object is a very distinct sound, the congnitive series arises as above with ear-consciousness taking the place of eye-consciousness.

If the near-death sign is just fairly distinct, two registering consciousnesses (Td) do not arise.

A person may also die soon after the dissolution of the second registering consciousness without bhavaṅga consciousness arising.

After the death consciousness of the present existence, the rebirth consciousness of the new existence arises without any break in the mental stream.

(2) At the time of near-death, the sign of kamma or the sign of past kamma-nimitta or the far-away sign of destiny appears at the mind door. If the object is very distnct, the following near-death cognitive series of consciousness arises.

"Na-Da-Ma-Ja-Ja-Ja-Ja-Ja-Td-Td-Bh-Cu-Paṭi-Bh-"

Na - *Bhavaṅga-calana* – vibrating life-continuum
Da - *Bhavaṅgu-paccheda* – arrested life-continuum
Ma -*Manodvārāvajjana* – mind-door directing con-

http://www.dhammadownload.com

sciousness
It apprehends the sense object and determines whether the sense object is good or bad.

Ja - *Javana citta* – impulsive consciousness
It enjoys the taste of the sense object.

Td - *Tadālambana* – registering consciousness
It continues enjoying the taste of the sense object.

Bh- *Bhavaṅga* – life-continuum
It marks the end of the near-death congnitive series.

Cu - *Cutti citta* – death consciousness
The person dies when death consciousness perishes.

Paṭi -*Paṭisandhi citta* - rebirth consciousness
A new existence begins at the arising moment of this mind.

Bh - Bhavaṅga citta - life continuum flows on.

Here too if the near-death sign is just fairly distinct, two registering consciousnesses (Td) do not arise. And a person may die soon after the dissolution of the second registering conscousness without bhavaṅga consciousness arising.

Soon after the death consciousness of the present existence, the rebirth consciousness of the new existence arises without any break in the mental stream. After that life continuum arises continuously to keep the new existence alive.

5 Is the Person in the New Existence the Same as the Person in the Present Existence?

http://www.dhammadownload.com

In Buddhism when a person passes to a new existence, no mental entities and no material entities are transmitted from one existence to another. All the mental and physical entities of the present existence perish at death and new mental and physical entities are generated by the productive kamma that produces the new existence. In that case, are the person in the present existence and the person in the next existence different?

"Neither the same nor yet another."
(Visuddhimagga)

In the ultimate sense according to Abhidhamma, persons do not exist; human beings, celestial beings, woeful beings do not exist. Only continuous chains of mental and physical entities exist. Only a continuous stream of mental and physical entities exists in the present existence also. All mental and physical entities perish soon after they have arisen. Productive kamma and other causes keep on preducing new mental and physical entities. There is no mental or physical entity which is permanent, which does not perish soon after it has been generated. So we can see that no person is involved.

But according to conventional truth, we assume that only a person exists throughout the present existence even though mental and physical entities are changing all the time.

The best evidence is the continuous chain of the many series of mental and physical entities in various existances of the Bodhisatta from the existence of **Sumedha** when he attained the prophecy from Buddha Dipaṅkarā up to

http://www.dhammadownload.com

the existence of **Siddhattha Prince** when he became Gotama Buddha. In the long duration of four asaṅkheyya and one hundred thousand world cycles, many billions of existences arise and perish in which the Bodhisatta tried to fulfil perfections.

No one can become a Buddha by just trying to fulfil perfections or accumulate virtues in a single existence. Four asaṅkheyya and one hundred thousand world cycles represent the shortest duration for completing the perfections to become a Buddha. During this long span of time the mental and physical series of many billion existences continue in a single long chain carrying the accumulated virture and kamma properties until they become extremely strong to give full support to become a Buddha.

6 The Evidences that Verify a Single Mental Stream

The Buddha taught only the natural truths that he knew by his direct knowledge out of his own experience. On the full moon night of May in the year 588 B.C., the night when he was to be fully enlightened as a Buddha, the Bodhisatta sat on the Invincible Throne, focused his attention on mindfulness of breathing and developed the fourth rūpāvacara jhāna.

He had developed mastery in five ways in each of the eight jhāna attainments and fulfilled all the requisites for developing supernormal powers. His mind was pure, cleansed, free from lust and defilements, pliable, alert, steady and unshakeable. It was in a perfect state in which super-

http://www.dhammadownload.com

normal power would arise easily when the mind was directed to the object of supernormal power.

So he emerged from the fourth jhāna and directed his mind to the knowledge of recollecting his past existences. Thereupon, the supernormal knowledge of former existences *(Pubbenivāsānussati Abhiññā)* arose in him easily.

Through that supernormal knowledge, he recollected and saw all past activities, events, and experiences of the past existences going back from the previous life right up to the existence when he was Sumedha the hermit; he recollected also in backward order many existences and world cycles prior to them, and recollected in forward order his existences up to that of Setaketu Deva just before the present one.

The noble Bodhisatta who recollected successive existences of the past through supernormal power could also see with penetrative insight thus:

> *"There were only the phenomena of mind and matter (nāma-rūpa) throughout the continuous rounds of existence, the beginning of which is not known; on all the three occasions of birth, living and death, there were only these two phenomena of nāma and rūpa (mentality and materiality).*
>
> *"Indeed in all abodes and at all times, the phenomena of nāma and rūpa are in a continuous state of flux, like the flame of an oil lamp or like the current of a river, and through*

http://www.dhammadownload.com

a succession of cause and effects, it is only the continuum of nāma and rūpa which fulfils the various functions concerned such as seeing the sight, hearing the sound, etc., at the six doors of eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind, thus giving rise to various modes of intimating one's intention (viññatti) by bodily movements and verbal expression, etc.

"In reality there is no sentient individual at all to be called 'I', 'he', 'man', etc. Indeed, there is not a single Deva, Māra or Brahmā who can create such a sentient being."

The above description was written by **Bhaddanta Vicittasārābhivaṁsa,** *Tipiṭakadhara Dhammabhaṇḍāgārika Agga Mahāpaṇḍita,* in 'The Great Chronicle of Buddhas'. From this writing we can understand clearly how successive existences arise and pass away one after another. From the existence of the hermit **Sumedha** to the existence of *Prince Siddhattha,* many billion existences arose and passed away. Yet the series of mental and physical entities continued from one existence to another in a very long chain without any interruption.

And what really took place in the long chain was only the arising and perishing of mental entities and material entities; no 'person' nor 'being' was involved. Also a permanent, immortal entity called 'soul' or 'spirit' or 'jīva' or 'atta' was not involved. Since this permanent entity called 'soul' or 'atta' does not really exist, an Almighty Being who created the 'soul' or 'atta' and all living beings does

http://www.dhammadownload.com

not really exist.

Because the Buddha vividly knew the absence of *'atta'*, he boldly declared the **'Anatta Doctrine'**. Only when we understand the 'anatta' or 'soulless' or 'selfless' nature of the psychophysical phenomena clearly with direct insight knowledge, shall we gain emancipation from all suffering.

The Arising of Divine Eye and Other Supernormal Powers

Again in the second watch of that night the Bodhisatta directed his mind towards acquiring Divine Eye which is also known as *Cutūpapāta Ñāṇa.* Thereupon, that supernormal knowledge arose in him easily. With this supernormal knowledge he could see sentient beings on the verge of death and beings just after taking conception. He could also see all sentient beings in the thirty-one planes of existence.

After seeing through Divine Eye the denizens of woeful abodes suffering misfortune, he pondered the causes of their miseries. Thereupon, *Yathākammūpaga Abhiññā,* the supernormal power of knowing the kamma which gives rise to each being, arose in him. By this power he knew the deeds of demerit done by the denizens of woeful abodes. Similarly, on pondering the reasons why fortunate human beings, deities and Brahmās were enjoying immense happiness, he came to know the deeds of merit done by these fortunate beings. In other words he realized that the

http://www.dhammadownload.com

kammas accumulated by each being are determining the fate and fortune of that being.

Pondering on the Principle of Dependent Arising

In the third watch of that auspicious night the Bodhisatta pondered on the Principle of Dependent Arising *(Paṭiccasamuppāda)*. When he contemplated the true nature of all beings living in one hundred thousand crore universes and belonging to the three passages of time (past, present and future), he came to know full well that, no matter how numerous humans, deities, brahmās and woeful beings were in each universe, they could be reduced to twelve factors of the Doctrine of Dependent Arising as the ultimate realities: ignorance and kamma formations (past factor as cause);consciousness, mental factors and kamma-born matter, sense bases, contact and feeling (present factors as effect), craving, clinging and kamma formations (present factors as cause); birth, ageing and death (future factors as effect).

It is the usual practice of every Bodhisatta on the eve of his attainment of Buddhahood to reflect on the Doctrine of Dependent Arising in forward and backward orders. Then he contemplated the ultimate realities that should be reflected in insight meditation *(vipassanā)*, and he realized that the same twelve factors of *Paṭiccasamuppāda* form objects of vīpassanā. As there are a hundred thousand crores of world systems in the Field of Authority of a

http://www.dhammadownload.com

Buddha, there are also a hundred thousand crores each of the twelve factors. The total number of these objects will then become one million and two hundred thousand crores.

As each of the factors of *Paṭiccasamuppāda* numbering one million two thousand crores promotes three insight knowledges, namely, insight knowledge of impermanence, insight knowledge of suffering and insight knowledge of not-self, there arose altogether three million six hundred thousand crores of *Mahāvajīra Insight Wisdom.*

By undertaking Mahāvajīra Insight Meditation, the Bodhisatta easily developed ten insight knowledges, fourfold Path Widom and fourfold Fruition Wisdom. The fourfold Path Wisdom eradicates all defilements including latent defilements *(anusaya kilesās).* So as soon as the Arahatta Fruition arose, *Sabbaññuta Ñāṇa* (Omnisicent Wisdom) arose together with the attainment of Buddhahood.

As all Bodhisattas, just before they attained Buddhahood, reflected on the Doctrine of Dependent Arising in forward and backward orders and undertook insight meditation by defining the twelve factors of *Paticcasamuppāda* as impermanence, suffering and not-self, so too the disciples of the Buddha must discern the causal relations of Dependent Arising and undertake vipassanā on the twelve factors of *Paṭiccasamuppadā.*

It is clearly stated in *Visuddhi Magga* (2, 221) and Abhidhamma Commentary (2, 189) thus:

http://www.dhammadownload.com

"There is no one, even in a dream, who has emancipated from the round of misery without the ability to break through the Paṭiccasamuppāda Causal Relations of the Saṁsāra machine with his wisdom sword which has been sharpened on the sacred whet-stone of concentration.

Therefore, meditators must discern with his direct knowledge the causal relations of dependent Arising as described in Abhiddhamma as follows:

(1) in the past existence, dependent on ignorance (avijjā) arose kamma formations (saṅkhāra);

(2) dependent on kamma formations arises resultant consciousness (viññāṇa) in the present existence;

(3) dependent on resultant consciousness arise associated mental factors (nāma) and kamma-born matter (rūpa);

(4) dependent on mentality-materiality (nāma-rūpa) arise six internal bases (saḷāyatana);

(5) dependent on internal bases arises contact (phassa) with sense object;

(6) dependent on contact arises feeling (vedanā);

(7) dependent on feeling arises craving (taṇhā);

(8) dependent on craving arises clinging (upādāna);

(9) dependent on clinging arise kamma formations (kamma-bhava) and rebirth process (upapatti-bhava);

(10) dependent on kamma formations (in the present existence) arises birth (jāti) (in the future exist-

http://www.dhammadownload.com

ence);

(11) dependent on birth arise ageing-and-death (jarā-maraṇa), worry (soka), lamentation (parideva), pain (dukkha), grief (domanassa) and despair (upāyāsa).

The way how to discern the causal relations of Paṭiccasamuppāda vividly is taught in International Pa-auk Forest Buddha Sāsana Centres in Myanmar. The meditators who have discerned the causal relations of Dependent Arising from one existence to another can clearly see the continuous series of arising and dissolving of mental entities and physical entities in a single long chain. It is similar to seeing the whole sequence of the scenes in a movie after watching the movie.

The Buddha's teaching is endowed with six excellent attributes including *'Sandiṭṭhika'*, that is, the teaching or Dhamma can be seen and realized vividly by one's direct knowledge if one practises it. Anyone who is interested to get direct experience can come and mediate in the International Pa-auk Forest Meditation Centres at any time.

By verifying the causal relations of Dependent Arising by one's direct knowledge, one can simultaneously verify that the mental stream continues from one existence to another in a long chain and that the kamma produces its effects continuously to sustain each new existence.

Evidences for Transmission of the Properties of

http://www.dhammadownload.com

Consciousness and Mental Factors in the Mental Stream

Another evidence for the occurrence of a single mental stream in a long chain of existences is that the properties of consciousness and mental factors are transmitted from mind to mind in the mental stream. For example, the reason why we can still remember what we have learnt in childhood is that the knowledge is transmitted from mind to mind and stored up in the mental stream. It is similar to the transmission of the recordings in one CD disk to another.

The knowledge, the perception, the feeling, the kamma properties, etc., are being transmitted from mind to mind and they remain in the mental stream. Since the mental stream is not cut off at death and it continues to the next existence, all the knowledge, perceptions, feelings, kamma properties, etc., that one has accumulated in one's uncountable existences are stored up in one's mental stream.

That is the reason why there are many persons all over the world who can remember their past existences. Those who cannot remember their past existences can be hypnotized and asked to relate their past existences correctly. We have read about **Mrs. Tighe** from the United States of America who could remember, under hypnosis, her past existence as **Bridy Murphy** in Ireland about 150 years ago.

Also **infant prodigies,** that is, extremely talented children, have appeared all over the world. **Christian Heineken** in England could talk within a few hours of his birth, repeat passages from the Bible at the age of one year and answer any question on geography at the age of

http://www.dhammadownload.com

two. **Piṭaka Maung Tun Kyine** of Myanmar could recite Piṭaka Pāḷi passages at the age of six without learning them. These stories clearly demonstrate that the knowledge learnt in previous existences is being conveyed in the mental stream of the present existence.

By looking at the mental stream of a person, the **Budddha** could see that person's past experiences, learnings, outstanding achievements, wholesome deeds and unwholesome deeds performed by that person in many existences, because all these data are present in his mental stream. Not only the Buddha but also an ordinary person like the American miracle man, **Edgar Cayce,** could obsserve under hypnosis the past experiences, achievements, talents, kammas, etc., conveyed from many past existences to the present existence of many persons. These subject matters are described in Chapter (3) of this book.

The positive evidences for past existences described in chapter (3) and the concrete evidences for future existences described in Chapter (4) are the best evidences to demonstrate that kamma and its results, the round of rebirths called Saṁsāra, and the continuous mental stream in successive existernces of each individual really exist.

References

1 *Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, "Abhidhamma" (Higher Level) Vol. I, pp. 175-194.*

2 *Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, "Abhiddhamma" (Higher Level) Vol. II, pp. 43-46; 90-122.*

3 *Bhikkhu Bodhi, General Editor, "A Comprehen-*

http://www.dhammadownload.com

sive Manual of Abhidhamma", pp. 219-233, 274-278.

4 *Bhaddanta Vicittasārābhivaṁsa, "The Great Chronicle of Buddhas," Vol.II, pp. 244-265.*

5 *Pa-auk Tawya Sayadaw and Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, "Breakthrough in Samatha Meditation and Vipassanā Meditation", pp. 64-74.*

6 *Nārada Mahā Thera, "The Buddha and His Teachings", pp.250-272.*

http://www.dhammadownload.com

11

The Right to Create One's Fate and Destiny Freely

1 The Free and Just Kamma Doctrine

For having taken refuge in the Triple Gem and revered the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṁgha for a life time, **Saraṇa Gamana Thera** enjoyed many billion blissful existences without being cast down to woeful abodes. In his last existence at the time of Gotama Buddha he became an Arahant at the age of seven years just by reciting *'Buddhaṁ saraṇaṁ gacchāmi, Dhammaṁ saraṇaṁ gacchāmi, Saṁghaṁ saraṇaṁ gacchāmi."*

In his one turn of the round of rebirths **Venerable Mahā-Moggallāna,** being attached to his wife with lust and blindly believing his wife's slander against his parents, beat his blind parents to death cruelly. For this wicked heinous deed he was tortured miserably and killed many times in hell for millions of years. After escaping from hell he was beaten until his bones were crushed to powder and he had to die very miserably for a hundred existences. In

http://www.dhammadownload.com

his last existence, even though he was foremost in supernormal power among the disciples of Gotama Buddha, he was again beaten by five hundred thieves until his bones were crushed to small pieces and he passed away to Nibbāna.

Good deed bears good results more than a billionfold.

Bad deed bears bad results more than a billionfold.

The **'Law of kamma'**, which, states that 'kammas bear results naturally as they should'; does not give favour to anyone. It is not controlled by any Almighty Being. It operates freely and justfully in its own field.

The law of kamma is a natural law. All science laws are also natural laws. They are neither prescribed nor created by any Almighty Being or Creator. Scientists can explain that all planets including the earth and the moon, and all stars including our sun are travelling systematically under the control of these natural laws in infinite space.

By making use of the natural laws scientists invented and produced many wonderful utenisls and machines like cassette recorders, refrigerators, televisions and computers.

Among physical energies the atomic energy is most powerful. The atomic energy can be converted to electric energy and can be used to drive ships, trains and aeroplanes. It can also be used in the form of atomic bombs and hydrogen bombs to destroy towns and cities and the whole world.

Similarly the mental energy and kamma energy, which

http://www.dhammadownload.com

are more powerful than the atomic energy, can be used for the welfare of oneself and others or for the destruction of oneself and others. If it is used properly, it can elevate one's life to the highest and greatest level like becoming a Buddha. It can liberate uncountable number of humans, deities and brahmās from suffering. On the other hand, if it is unproperly manipulated, it can send one to hell or it can wage the third World War destroying all mankind.

It is the most precious news to learn that we can freely make use of the law of kamma as we like and we ourselves can control our fate and destiny.

The famous English play–writer **William Shakespeare** wrote; *"I am the captain of my soul and the master of my fate."*

We can now say, *"I am the captain of my mind and the creator of my fate."*

2 Three Kinds of Wrong View

In *Aṅguttara Mahāvagga, Titthāyana Sutta*, the Buddha described three kinds of basic wrong view.

(1) *Pubbekata hetuka diṭṭhi* – the wrong view which belives that all happiness and misery that living beings encounter are conditioned by their past actions.

(2) *Issara nimmāna vāda* or *Visama hetuka diṭṭhi* – the wrong view which believes that all happiness and misery that living beings encounter are created by an Almighty Being who rules the world; it is the wrong view taking the wrong

http://www.dhammadownload.com

reason as the cause.

(3) *Ahetuka diṭṭhi* – the wrong view which believes that all happiness and misery that living beings encounter have no cause; they arise by chance.

The Buddha approached the ascetics and brahmins who preached these beliefs and asked them, "Friends, some people commit killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, slandering, speaking harshly, speaking vainly, plotting to take other's property illegally, plotting to destroy other's life and property and taking the wrong view. Do they commit these immoral actions because they are prompted by their past actions, or because they are directed by an Almighty Being, or do they perform the immoral actions without any cause and reason?"

Those ascetics and brahmins could not give a reasonable answer. Those who believe that all happiness and misery which they experience are conditioned by their past actions have no 'wish' to do something good and exert no 'effort' to do good. If they do not know exactly what is good and what is bad, what should be done and what should not be done, they will live heedlessly and leisurely without any care to do good deeds for to them doing such deeds will bring no benefits. So they will end up with the *'view of doing nothing' (Akiriya vāda).*

Similarly those who believe that all happiness and misery which they experiense are created by an Almighty Being and those who believe that all happiness and misery arise without any cause and reason will also end up with the *'view of doing nothing'* for to them doing something good brings no benefits.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

3 One Should Rely on Oneself

If a person's being alive, happiness and misery are created by an Almighty Being according to his will, then that person has no right to do for his progress and prosperity. What he should do is to pray to that Almighty Being the whole day to give him blessing.

But in reality a person, who exerts no effort to work for his progress but only keeps praying to the Almighty Being day and night, will not become prosperous. Only those who work hard become prosperous. So we have the saying;

"God helps those who help themselves."

So God will help only those people who work hard for their progress. The essence of this advice is to rely on oneself and one's ability to work for one's progress.

The Buddha, who understands the independent operation of the law of kamma and the fact that one must work for one's own progress, openly declares not to look for some external object for worship and for relying on but to revere oneself and rely on oneself.

Attā hi attano nātho ko hi nātho paro siyā.

Oneself, indeed, should one revere and rely on.

How can others be the objects of one's reverence and reliance? *(Dhammapada 160)*

Attadīpā bhikkhave viharatha, atta saraṇā anañña saraṇā.

O monks, make yourself an island and dwell on that island, relying on oneself, believe and revere oneself.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

Don't rely on others.

Dhammadīpā bhikkhve viharatha, Dhamma saraṇā anañña saraṇā.

O monks, make the Dhamma (natural truth) an island and dwell on that island, relying on the Dhamma, believe and revere the Dhamma. Don't rely on other objects.

The Buddha himself, in order to attain the Omniscience *(Sabbaññuta Ñāṇa)* that knows all the natural truths correctly and to become the fully self-enlightened Buddha, did not rely on anyone and any supernatural power. He didn't receive any help from any Almighty Being. He relied entirely on himself and walked on the way of natural truth called Dhamma, fulfilling Perfections for four asaṅkheyya and one hundred thousand world cycles and practising the Noble Eightfold Path to the utmost. Thus he became a Buddha on account of his own endeavour.

After attaining Buddhahood he explained the true nature of ultimate realities and pointed out the Noble Eightfold Path or the Noble Threefold Training of morality, concentration and wisdom to eradicate the ten defilements which are the causes of all suffering. By strenuously undertaking this noble training one can reach the summit to enjoy eternal peace and happiness.

"We Buddhas can just point out the way. It is your duty to exert the effort to liberate yourself from suffering".

The Budha's candid advice should be kept in mind always. Though he is venerated by humans, deities and

http://www.dhammadownload.com

brahmās and he is the most powerful person in all the worlds, he cannot prevent a wicked man who has been committing immoral actions from being reborn in hell after death. He cannot help that man to be reborn in a celestial realm unless that man avoids evil and performs meritorious deeds as advised by him. As Mahā Moggallāna, who was foremost in supernormal power could not avoid the bad effect of a bad kamma, so too the Buddha cannot protect a person from the bad effect of his bad kamma.

By oneself, indeed, is evil done;
by oneself is one defiled.
By oneself is evil left undone;
By one, indeed, is one purified.
Purity and impurity depends on oneself.
No one purifies another.

(Dhammapada 165)

* *The mind which is defiled by oneself can be purified only by oneself. It cannot be purified by the Buddha or by an Almighty Being.*

* *If you want to be noble and prosperous, walk on the noble path.*

4 The Way to Success and Prosperity

The kamma that conditions you to be born in a rich or poor family, in a high or low class, is your original inheritance. You can become prosperous, enjoying good health and great happiness by your present effort and foresight.

It is like sending a satellite into orbit by the main rocket and then changing the course of the satellite by firing small

http://www.dhammadownload.com

rockets in the satellite.

The formula of success in Buddhism is 'kamma, wisdom and effort'. 'Kamma' here means both past kammas and present kammas. Present kammas are more important as they have greater force to bear results because of their proximity. Good present kammas will also help past good kammas to bear results. We must perform good deeds to get good results in the present existence as well as in future existences.

We gain the human existence because our respective good kammas condition us to be reborn as human beings. Also we are very fortunate to attain the human existence at the time when the Buddha's teaching is flourishing and at the place where Buddhism flourished. Besides we are born in a Buddhist family and we get the chance to take refuge in the Triple Gem, that is, the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṁgha. Besides we can read and listen to the teachings of the Buddha which guide us to get to the summit of our life, that is the noblest and happiest state of life.

These attainments are the results of our good kammas that generate our human existences. To be born as a human being, to come across the teachings of the Buddha, to have faith in the Triple Gem and to learn the teachings of the Buddha and to become a Buddhist monk are the five great ideals that are very hard to attain. They are called *'dullabhas'*. As lay persons we attain four *'dullabhās'*. So our existences are very noble and very precious. We should be delighted and proud to attain these good ideals. We can regard these attainments as our original investment.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

To be rich and prosperous, to enjoy a long healthy life, to attain physical happiness and mental happiness in the paresent existence, we must perform appropriate good actions with wisdom and great effort.

Everyone should work for a living. To have a useful job is to have the chance to contribute to the family and to the community. Whatever we do we should do it with good intention to develop good kamma and we should do it efficiently, skifully and diligently to the best of our ability. We should also exert constant effort to acquire higher knowledge to improve our ability. If we do a business, we should know everything about the business and how to carry it out successfully.

Some do business without sufficient knowledge and without strenuous effort. When they fail, they blame their kamma, saying, 'My kamma is not good; so I fail. That man's kamma is good; so he is successful." By 'kamma' here, they refer to their past kammas, not the present poor kamma which they perform and which is the main reason for their failure. If they take the past kamma to be the main reason, they are holding the wrong view called *'Pubbekata hetuka diṭṭhi'*, which believes that the past kamma determines one's fate and fortune.

We must have wisdom which is the most important quality of a person. To develop wisdom we must acquire academic and professional knowledge as well as the knowledge of the teachings of the Buddha. The knowledge of kamma and its results and how kamma operates is especially important. Only when we understand the law of kamma correctly, shall we attain the right understanding

http://www.dhammadownload.com

and the right view (*sammā-diṭṭhi).*

The right understanding will give rise to the right thought, the right speech, the right action and the right livehihood. Only then shall we be careful to avoid immoral actions and willing to do meritorious deeds. So we shall become a virtuous and upright person with good kammas.

The present good kammas will start bearing good results from the present existence. They will also act as supportive kammas that will help past good kammas to bear results. Persons with strong good kammas are usually very fortunate and they easily succed in whatever they do.

Thus while we are doing our job and our business with good volition and goodwill, we should also perform meritorious deeds as much as possible. Also we must use wisdom and foresight and exert strenuous effort to achieve success in whatever we do. With wisdom and foresight we should choose the right person to deal with and the right time to do the right action.

Some people rely on past kammas too much and tend to do things hurriedly and recklessly. For example, if a person, thinking 'I possess srtong good kammas and nothing will hurt me', jumps into a fire, he will be burnt. If he goes through a forest infested with tigers, he will be bitten by tigers because his present action or kamma is stupid and bad.

There is a good **simile of three fish**. A fisherman rowed a boat on a river and cast his fishing net into the water. He caught three fish and set them free in the boat. One fish relied on luck, thinking 'If I am lucky, I shall get to

http://www.dhammadownload.com

safety' and stayed still in the boat. Finally it was taken home by the fisherman and cooked as curry. Another fish relied on effort, thinking 'I will escape only if I can jump out of the boat.' So it kept jumping all the time, but it could not escape. The fisherman worried that he might lose that fish. So he hit it with the paddle, killing it.

The third fish had some wisdom. It knew that it would not get to safety by remaining still and doing nothing. If it jumped recklessly like its friend, it would be killed by the fisherman. So it waited for the right time to jump. When the fisherman cast his net into the water again, the boat tilted over that side and the fish jumped out of the boat and got into the water safely.

From this lesson we should apply the formula *'kamma, wisdom, effort'* to whatever we do to achieve success.

5 The Couple who Met great Loss for lack of Wisdom and Effort

During the time of Gotama Buddha a multimillionaire by the name of **Mahā Dhana** possessed 800 million rupees. He had one son. Thinking that his son would have more than enough wealth to use in his whole life, the rich man let the boy play joyfully without giving him a proper education.

When the son came of age, the rich man arranged the marriage between his son and the daughter of his rich friend who also possessed 800 million rupees. When the parents died, the young couple inherited 1600 million rupees. So their past kammas were very good. But they were not educated.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

A group of alcoholics wanted to get their wealth. They made friends with the rich man's son and enticed him to drink alcohol. They put alcohol in lotus flowers and sucked the alcohol with tubes, saying that they were sucking the nectar. The rich man's son became intertsted and sucked the alcohol from a lotus flower. Gradually he became an alcoholic. He spent his money freely on food and drinks and in giving prizes to dancers who entertained them.

His friends borrowed money from him again and again without paying back the money. As he could not manage his wealth, he ran out of money and had to sell his property and his houses one after another. They had no place to live and no food to eat. They became beggars and went round begging for food and money.

When the Buddha went into the city on alms round and met them, they were very old. The Buddha said to Ānanda:

"Ānanda, you look at that old couple holding a cup each and begging for food and money. They were the son and the daughter of two very rich men in Sāvatthi. Though they had inherited a large amount of wealth, they did not know how to manage it. The husband associated with alcoholics and became an alcoholic himself, They persuaded him to spend money freely and borrowed money from him without paying back. So the couple finally had no money and no property and became beggars.

"The couple possessed excellent past kammas. If they did business with good kamma, wisdom and effort when they were young, they would become first-class rich people; or if they were ordained as monks and they under-

http://www.dhammadownload.com

took meditation, the husband would become an Arahant and the wife a non-returner. They missed both these good opportunities.

"Then when they became middle-eged persons, if they did good business with wisdom and great effort, they would become second-class rich people; or if they were ordained as monks and they undertook meditation, the husband would become a non-returner and the wife a once returner. They also missed both these good opportunites.

"Then when they got to the third-stage of life, if they did good business with wisdom and great effort, they would become third-class rich people; or if they were ordained as monks and they undertook meditation, the husban would become a once-returner and the wife a stream-enterer. Again they missed both these good opportunites.

"Now they were old and they couldn't do any business, neither could they become monks and undertake meditation. They were like old cranes without feathers which could no longer fly and which stood in a dry lake waiting for a fish to appear. They were just waiting for the time of death."

6 Those Who Reach the Top with good Present Kamma, Wisdom and Effort

We do not know what good kammas we have accumulated in the past. But we can acquire good kammas as much as we like at the present. These present good kammas will start bearing good results from the present existence and they will support the past good kammas to bear good results.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

Kamma is volitional action. We should do a good action or job or business as the basic requirement. Then we should do it with thorough knowledge or wide wisdom and strenuous effort. This is the formula to get to the top.

When I was a university student, I read about the life of **Abraham Lincoln**, the sixteenth President of the United States of America, and I appreciated it very much. He was born in a log cabin in the forest. He had to leave school at a very early age to help his father cutting wood in the forest.

However, he didn't want to be a wood-cutter for life like his father. He wanted to be a leader of his nation. So he tried to acquire knowledge. He went to the houses near the forest and asked the house-holders to lend him an old book which they had read. He studied the book at his leisure time, that is at night by the light of the fire that kept them warm. He noted the facts carefully, returned the book and borrowed another book. So he acquired the knowledge from many books.

He appeared for the law examination and passed it. He became a lawyer in 1837. He listened to public speakers and practised public speaking in the prairie, regarding the grazing cattle as his audience. As *'practice makes perfect'*, he became a good speaker with a large amount of knowledge. He was also honest and sincere. So he became well known as a successful lawyer and successful politician.

He became a U.S. representative from 1847 to 1849. As Republican candidate for U.S. Senate in 1858, he made his mark in debates with Stephen A.Douglas. He regarded

http://www.dhammadownload.com

slavery as an "injustice" and an evil. He opposed its extension. He was elected President of the United States of America in 1860.

+ + +

In the 2004, March 8 issue of Time journal the story of **Bill Gates,** an American multibillionaire, the richest man in the world, was mentioned briefly. He owned 46 billion dollars in his bank account,. He donated 26 billion dollars to **'Bill Gates Foundation'** to do research and to promote the health and the educational affairs of the world public.

For his most generous donation for the welfare of the world public Queen Elizabeth of England conferred the Knight Commander title, the highest British Empire award, on him. How did he become the richest man in the world?

Bill Gates belongs to an ordinary American family. While he was studying in High School, the school was equipped with computers. When he knew how to use a computer, he was interested in it and he played with it at his leisure time. He appreciated the unique ability of the computer and tried to solve difficult problems with it.

Constant practice made him a perfect computer expert. When the officers of the traffic controlling department of their town asked the high school for help to set up a computer-controlled traffic system, the teachers gave the problem to Bill Gates and his companion to solve it.

Bill Gates gladly accepted the challenge and worked until midnight, sometimes the whole night, with the computer. The human mind is more powerful than the computer. As the knife becomes sharper when it is constantly

http://www.dhammadownload.com

sharpened on the whetstone, so too the mind becomes more and more intelligent by constant thinking, learning and making use of it.

His strenuous effort brought success within a month. More dufficult problems were entrusted to him, more hardwork followed, and success after success were achieved by him. Nothing succeeds like success and there is nothing as sweet as success.

After completing his high school studies, he attended the Harvard University. But his economic outlook had already opened up and he tried to think of the necessities that should go along with computers. He did research to write softwares for the use of computers in several ways and for solving various problems. He established **'Microsoft Company'** and started producing softwares for computers.

As he was the pioneer in this field, his softwares were in great demand. He formed a research group to produce new softwares and became a billionaire very soon.

Knowledge is power. Wisdom is the most precious gold pot which can produce whatever one wishes for. It is never empty however much one takes out of it, and it cannot be stolen by anyone.

In the age of computers, if one can produce new computer softwares which are more useful and more powerful than old ones, one can sell them like hot cakes and make money quickly.

\+ + +

In a town called Kyike Hto in Mon State, Myanmar, a

http://www.dhammadownload.com

young man by the name of **Ba Tin** made his living by digging laterite for making laterite bricks.

His uncle from Mandalay visited Kyike Hto and advised him thus, "My nephew, what you earn from your job is just enough to buy rice. You can never make both ends meet. If you want to devote your life to digging laterite, you should go to the treasure land in Phar Kant near Myit Kyi Nar, the capital of Kachin State. I have a friend there. I shall help you to get a small plot of land and you can dig there the whole day. If you get a precious stone, a good ruby, you will be a rich man."

Ba Tin agreed to go to the treasure land. He dug with great effort day after day. After a few months, he found precious stones and became very rich.

So the nature of the job or *'kamma'* is also important. We need knowledge or wisdom to get a good-paying job. So young people should work hard to acquire computer knowledge, commercial knowledge, engineering knowledge, medical knowledge or any professional knowledge to get a good job. Whatever job one gets, one should always work efficiently and diligently with wisdom. Then one will be assured of success and become prosperous.

Not only the job to become rich is important, the job to acquire good merit or good *kamma* is also important. In fact it is more important to acquire merit as we can die at any moment and not to be cast down to a woeful abode after death is most urgent. So we should always perform meritorious deeds as much as possible. The good *kammas* will help us to be more fortunate and more successful in whatever we do.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

7 The Opportunities for Good Kammas and Bad Kammas to Bear Results

There are four types of favourable conditions which favour good kammas to bear results and impede bad kammas from bearing results.

(1) *Gati sampatti* – to attain good, blissful existence,

(2) *Upadhi sampatti* – to attain good, beautiful appearace,

(3) *Kāla sampatti* – to come across favourable time or occasion,

(4) *Payoga sampatti* – to be endowed with effort, dillgence and wisdom.

There are also four types of unfavourable conditions which impede good kammas from bearing results and favour bad kammas to bear results.

(1) *Gati vipatti* – to attain bad, woeful existence,

(2) *Upadhi vipatti* – to attain bad, ugly appearance,

(3) *Kāla vipatti* – to come across unfavourable time or occasion,

(4) *Payoga vipatti* – to be devoid of effort, diligence and wisdom.

The human existence and the celestial existence are good or blissful existences. In these existences wholesome kammas are favourable to bear results whereas unwholesome kammas are unfavourable to bear results.

Animals, woeful ghosts, demons and denizens of hells are said to have bad or woeful existences. In these exis-

http://www.dhammadownload.com

tences wholesome kammas are unfovourable to bear results whereas unwholesome kammas are favourable to bear results.

Compared to animals, human beings can live much more blissfully whereas woeful ghosts and demons have to live more miserably. The denizens of hell are most miserable without any bliss whatsoever.

Compared to the human existence, the deity existence is more blissfull without almost any suffering. The brahmā existence is still more blissful; brahmās enjoy jhāna bliss constantly. However, deities and brahmās are not bold and diligent as human beings in performing meritorious deeds. Human beings can strive very strenuously until they become even Buddhas. Deities and Brahmās cannot become Buddhas.

Among human beings those with **good or beautiful appearance** enjoy greater privileges than those with bad or ugly appearance. People usually have a high esteem for handsome or beautiful persons, adore and respect them, and wish to associate with them. People usually have a low esteem for ugly or deformed persons and would not like to associate with them. Among the applicants for a job, having equal qualifications, handsome and graceful persons will have greater opportunity to be selected. In acting as movie actors and actresses and as fashion models also those with good appearance will be successful more easily than those with bad appearance.

Good appearance is more important in women than in men. Beautiful girls are loved by many people, especially by men. So they can choose the ones they like best to be

http://www.dhammadownload.com

their life partners. Many beautiful women, in spite of their poverty and low class, were chosen by kings and princes to be their queens.

To come across **favourable time and occasion is also** very important. When the whole country is peaceful and economy flourishes with good opportunities to do business, people can get jobs easily, and enjoy good income and a peaceful life. It is the time when good kammas are favorable to bear results. If, on the other hand, the country is not peaceful or it is at war or having economic depression, people lose their jobs, business fails, people have to abandon their houses and live in misery. It is the time when bad kammas are favorable to bear results.

The fourth condition, that is, **to be endowed with effort, diligence and wisdom or not,** depends more or less on oneself. We should be willing to work hard and diligently and to acquire knowledge because 'effort' and 'knowledge or wisdom' are the two main keys to success.

Without 'effort' and 'knowledge', one cannot succeed in life; one will have to live in porverty. We have read the story of the rich couple who became beggars for lack of effort and wisdom. We should bear in mind the formula of success which is *'action, wisdom, effort' (kamma, ñāṇa, vīriya)* and we should always abide by it.

> *You are the captain of your mind and the creator of your fate. You can manage your mind and your kamma freely to create the kind of life you like.*

http://www.dhammadownload.com

8 You will be miserable if you Associate with a person of Bad kamma

In the discourse of 38 blessings the top two blessings are:

(1) Not the associate with foolish, wicked persons,

(2) To associate with wise, upright persons.

These two highest blessings are most important for one's progress and prosperity. They are favourable to good kammas to bear results and unfavourable to bad kammas to produce their effects.

If one associates with foolish, wicked persons, one will also bcome foolish and wicked and lose one's good moral character which is the most valuable possession of a person. If moral character is ruined, one's life is also ruined and one shall be reborn in the woeful abodes again and again.

There are Myanmar sayings which state:

'If a fish is rotten, all the fish in a boat will be rotten' and *'if a tree flourishes with many shady branches, ten thousand birds can take shelter on it.'*

In a family if one member has great unwholesome kamma, the whole family or even the whole community will be in trouble. To associate with such a person is to come across unfavourable time or occasion *(kālavipatti)* when good kammas are unfavourable and bad kammas are favourable to bear results.

During the time of Gotama Buddha one thousand families live in a village. They earned their livings by fishing. One day a fisherman's wife became pregnant. From that

http://www.dhammadownload.com

day onwards the fishermen could not catch any fish. Besides the whole village was punished by the state seven times and burnt by fire seven times.

The village elders consulted with one another. They believed that a person with heinous deeds must be present in the village. So they divide the village into two parts. consisting of five hundred families each. The group which included the pregnant woman was in trouble as this group could not catch fish and could not get food. Again the elders divided this group into two sub-groups. Again the sub-group including the pregnant woman was in trouble. So they continued dividing the sub-group which was in trouble again and again until the pregnant woman was left alone.

She gave birth to the child miserably and had great trouble to feed the child. When the child could walk well, the mother gave him a a cup to go about begging and she deserted the child. When the child was seven years old, Venerable Sāriputta met him, took pity on him and ordained him as a novice. When the novice came of age, he was ordained as a monk and named **Losakatissa Thera.**

He undertook the Noble Threefold Training diligently and became an Arahant. Even though he became an Arahant, he didn't have enough food at any day. On the day he was to pass away to Nibbāna, he went together with Venerable Sāriputta on alms round. Then Venerable Sāriputta himself didn't get any alms-food.

Ven. Sāriputta asked Losakatissa Thera to go back to the monastery and wait there. Ven. Sāriputta went alone on alms round and one family invited him to have food at

http://www.dhammadownload.com

their house. He asked a man from that house to send alms-food to Losakatissa Thera. The man became hungry and he forgot to send food to a monk. So he ate the food on the way.

When Venerable Sāriputta came back to the monastery, he found out that Losakatissa Thera didn't have any food yet. he immediately went to King Kosala's palace and asked for *'catumadhū,* electuary made of four ingredients – sesame oil, molasses, honey and butter. On his return Ven. Sāriputta held the bowl and let Losakatissa Thera took the food from the bowl.

This was the only time in his whole life that Losakatissa Thera could take the food to his full. After taking his meal, he passed away to Nībbāna.

What had he done in the past? During the time of Kassapa Buddha, Losakatissa was a monk with good morality. One day a monk came to his monastery and asked for permission to let him stay there for a few days. But when the host monk saw that his monastery donor revered the guest monk very much, he became jealous.

The rich donor invited the two monks to have food at his house the next day. Early the next morning the host monk tapped the bell with his fingers and went to the donor's house.

The donor asked him why the guest monk didn't come. The host monk said, 'Your monk is so fond of sleep that he didn't wake up when I rang the bell. So I left him in the monastery.'

The donor served the host monk with wholesome food. After the monk finished his meal, the donor washed the

http://www.dhammadownload.com

alms bowl and put food for the guest monk. On his way to the monastery the host monk thought, 'If the guest monk have good food every day, he will not leave my monastery.' Because of jealousy be poured the alms food from his bowl onto the ground in a field.

When he got to his monastery, the guest monk was nowhere to be seen. As he knew the thought of the host monk, he left for another place flying through the air. He was indeed an Arahant.

The host monk felt remorseful. He was unhappy and he couldn't sleep and eat well. Not long after that he passed away and was reborn in hell. Jealousy is dreadful.

After he escaped from hell, he was reborn as ogres for five hundred existences and as dogs for five hundred existences . In all these existences he didn't have enough food to eat. After the last dog existence, he was cenceived in the womb of the fisherman's wife.

Because of his good kammas that he acquired as a monk of good morality at the time of Kassapa Buddha, he regained the human existence and later became a monk. And when he undertook the noble Threefold Training, he became an Arahant. Because of the heinous deed of throwing away the alms food for an Ahahant, even the whole village of one thousand families had to suffer miserabley while he was conceived in the womb of the fisherman's wife.

The effects and repercussions of heinous kammas can inflict people associated with the person of heinous deed. We should acquire one of the highest blessings by not associating with foolish, wicked persons.

+ + +

http://www.dhammadownload.com

Also in the *Dhammapada. Tayojana story*, we have learnt that a sail ship with seven hundred passengers departed from the shore and stopped still in the middle of the ocean. It could not be moved by any means. When the chief navigator suggested that a person of heinous deed might be present among them, they agreed to draw lots.

The chief navigator's pretty wife got the bad lot three times. So a sand pot was tied to her neck and she was thrown into the ocean. The ship moved immediately and the rest of them were safe. Because of the heinous kamma of a person, all the people in the ship could die.

What was the heinous deed of the chief navigator's wife? She was a pretty village maiden in her past existence. Her lover died and became a dog. The young dog followed her wherever she went. The young men in the village made fun of her, saying: "Look, the huntress is going out hunting with her dog. We shall have the chance to eat deer meat curry today."

She was ashamed. She tried to drive away the young dog when she went out again. But the dog persisted to follow her. She got angry, tied a small sand pot at its neck, and threw the dog into a ditch water. She met the same fate in her next existence as the pretty wife of the chief navigator.

9 You will be Prosperous if You Associate with a Person of Good Kamma

If a son or daughter with great good kamma is born in a family, the family will become prosperous. If one person among the relatives attains a high post with great authority,

http://www.dhammadownload.com

many of the relatives will enjoy great benefits. Many millions of humans, deities and brahmās gained liberation from all suffering because they met **the Buddha** and associated with him as a great good friend.

In Sri Lanka during the reign of **King Bhātika,** the persons who ate beef were fined heavily. Those who could not pay the fine had to work in the palace, cleaning the rubbish.

In one faimily the daughter was a very beautiful maiden. When the king saw her, he loved her very much. He took her and made her a young queen with the title **'Sāmādevī'**. Her family and all her relatives were freed from being punished and supported by the king so that they could make a decent living and live happily.

Because of the good kamma and the exceptional beauty of the maiden, all the relatives could enjoy prosperity and happiness.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

12

The Very Deep and Subtle Kamma Law

1 The Deep and Subtle Nature of Mental Entities

Starting from the time of **Thales** (624-550 B.C), an ancient Greek Philosopher, who was regarded as the Father of Western philosophy, philosopehers had been investigating the real entities that exist in nature. Two thousand six hundred years have elapsed; yet they do not know the ultimate natural realities which exist in 28 forms of ultimate materiality *(rūpas)* and 53 forms of ultimate mental entities *(nāma = consciousness and 52 mental factors)*.

In theology, which describes the universe, the earth, human beings, animals and trees to be created by an Almighty Being, the earth is regarded as the centre of the universe. However **Nicholas Copernicus** (1473-1543), a Polish astronomer, founder of Copernican system on which modern astronomy is based, spent a life time studying the movements of stars and planets. In 1543 he declared that it is the sun, not the earth, which is the centre of the solar system and that the earth is just a small planet

http://www.dhammadownload.com

revolving around the sun.

Galileo Galilei (1564-1642), Italian astronomer, mathematician and physicist whose investigation of natural laws laid the foundations of modern experimental science, invented the telescope and supported the statement of Copernicus. Based on the foundations of experimental science that they laid down, modern science made its progress by leaps and bounds. Yet modern science cannot investigate the mental entities up till now.

As ordinary people do not understand the mental entities in the form of consciousness *(citta)* and mental factors *(cetasikas)*, they will find it more difficult to understand 'the law of kamma', which is a special property of consciousness and mental factors. As they do not understand the natural law that kamma and its results really exist, they fondle and propose various kinds of wrong view.

Those who believe in an Almighty God or an Omnipotent Brahmā said that God or Brahmā created the universe, the earth and all living beings, and that he rules over all beings and determines their fates and destinies. So individuals have no freedom and no right to work for their progress and prosperity. They will have to submit themselves totally to that Almighty Being. This belief is called **'the View of Ruling Creator-God'** *(Issaranimmāna Vāda)* or **'the View of the Wrong Cause'** *(Visamahetuka Diṭṭhi)*.

Some believe and preach that all the happiness and the suffering that each individual experiences in the present existence are determined by his actions in past existences. So again no one has the right and the freedom to work for

http://www.dhammadownload.com

his progress and prosperity. This wrong view is called **'the view of Past Determinism'** *(Pubbekata-hetuka Diṭṭhi).*

Again some believe and preach that all the happiness and the suffering that each individual experiences in the present existence arise without any cause and reason. Thus for those who embrace this wrong belief, there is neither desire nor effort nor necessity to do this deed or abstain from that deed. This wrong view is known as **'the View of Uncausedness'** *(Ahetuka Diṭṭhi).* This view was preached by **Makkhali-gosāla,** a great heretic teacher.

Again some believe and preach **'the View of Ineffi-cacy of Action'** *(Akiriya Vāda).* According to this view there is no kamma. Even if one performs wholesome deeds or unwholesome deeds, no action is done and no kamma arises. For those who cherish this view, again there is no desire nor effort nor necessity to do this deed or abstain from that deed since no wholesome kamma or unwhole-some kamma exists. This view was preached by **Pūraṇākassapa,** a great heretic teacher.

Another great heretic teacher, **Ajita-Kesa-Kambala,** preached **'the View of Nihilism'** *(Naṭṭhika Diṭṭhi).* Though this view acknowledges the existence of whole-some deeds and unwholesome deeds, it denies the results of these deeds. So by giving alms, no benefits will arise. By supporting and caring for one's parents, one will get no benefits. By doing wrong to one's parents, one will not encounter any bad effect. There is no future existence. All the good virtres and the wickedness of a person diappear at the cemetery. After the corpse is cremated, nothing remains.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

The above wrong views are futile and fruitless. They do not encourage people to do meritorious deeds, but encourage to do immoral actions. They will cast down wrong believers into hell after death. Nevertheless, many people cannot think rationally and they believe what the heretic teachers preach.

When the teachings of the Buddha disappear, the wrong views of the heretics will flourish in the world until the next Buddha appears in the world again. A remarkable story of our Bodhisatta, **Nārada Jātaka**, will illustrate this fact below.

2 The Nārada Jātaka Illustrates how Strangely Kammas Bear Results

In the interim period between the dispenstations of Kassapa Buddha and Gotama Buddha, **King Ingati** ruled Mithilā country in Videharāja Division. He ruled the country justly in accordance with the ten precepts incumbent on a king. He loved his only daughter, **Princess Rusā**, very dearly. He let five hundred daughters of ministers to accompany her and let her live in a seven-storeyed building with a many-tiered roof. He also sent beautiful flowers, soft, delicate clothing, and good food to her daily.

Princess Rusā was very beautiful, intelligent and honourable. She also possessed the cumulative result of past meritorious deeds performed in one hundred thousand world cycles. The king also gave her money amounting to one thousand twice monthly and she donated the money to ascetics, brahmins and beggars.

On the full-moon day of November a 'star festival'

http://www.dhammadownload.com

was held in Mithilā in honour of the cluster of seven stars called 'Plieades' *(Krattikā)* and the whole city was beautifully decorated. On that day King Ingati washed his hair, applied sandal-wood paste to his body, put on coronation regalia, and took dinner. Then he sat in the open room of the palace surrounded by his ministers. At that moment the bright full moon rose in the clear eastern sky, breaking the darkness of the night.

"O ministers, the full moon is shining brightly and the night is very pleasant. In what way should we enjoy such a pleasant night?" asked the king.

The minister **Alāta,** who was the commander-in-chief, proposed first, "Your Majesty, in a very pleasant night like this we should organize our armed forces and wage war against countries we have not yet conquered."

The minister **Sunāma** then made his proposal: "Your Majesty, there is no one who does not abide by your will. Today is a full-moon sabbath day. In this pleasant full-moon night you should enjoy the best sensual pleasure, eating a variety of good food, watching beautiful dancers dance, and listening to sweet music and songs."

The minister **Vijaya** then proposed to the king: "Your Majesty, it is not difficult for your Majesty to enjoy the best sensual pleasure. On a special day like this, rather than enjoying sensual pleasure, it is better to approach a learned monk or brahmin. The learned monk or ascetic with wide knowledge can clarify any doubt your Majesty might have."

The king was delighted, saying: "I like what the minister Vijaya proposed. We should approach a learned monk or brahmin."

http://www.dhammadownload.com

The minister Alāta quickly said, "Your Majesty, if your Majesty wishes to approach a learned ascetic or monk, there is a heretic sage by the name of **Guna** in the dear park near Banares. He is famous for having wide knowledge. He belongs to the Kassapa lineage and he does not wear any clothe. He can speak strange subjects which are pleasant to listen to. That teacher can surely clarify your Majesty's doubt."

The king accepted this proposal. He rode a clean coach which had the shape of a full moon and was drawn by four white horses. He was accompanied by his ministers and his troops. When they got near to the place where the heretic teacher resided, the king alighted from the coach and walked to the teacher with reverence.

The king exchanged formal greetings with the sage and asked a question, "Venerable Kassapa, how should we treat our parents, our wife, our sons and daughters, aged people, monks, brahmins and citizens?"

Instead of answering the question, the heretic sage explained his doctrine, "Your Majesty, a person who practises asceticism or meditation will not get any good benefit or bad result for there is no future existence. This statement is correct for who ever comes from the future state of existence to the present existence? There are no parents and no teachers for who can admonish an uncultured person? We need not show any respect to aged people. All beings are of the same status. Some are wealthy and some are poor without any reason. There are no benefits for giving alms. The foolish offer alms and the wise receive them.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

"Your Majesty, there are only seven elements, which exist in the world. They are fire, earth, water, air, happiness, suffering and life. Only these elements are permanent. Killing and torturing do not exist. If a person cut the head of another person with a sharp sword, the sword goes through between the seven elements. No killing is committed. As killing is not involved, how can there be the bad results of an immoral action?

"All human beings will automatically become pure when eighty four world cycles pass by. So long as eighty four world cycles are not completed, one cannot purify oneself by controlling one's bodily action, verbal action and mental action or by performing meritorious deeds. Even one may perform many demeritorious deeds., one will be automatically pure when eighty four world cycles are completed. All beings can be alive only for eighty four world cycles. After that period no being can come into existence again. As the ocean cannot go beyond the shores, no one can go beyond that period."

To believe that good deeds and bad deeds do not bear any results and killing a person does not amount to murder is very dangerous. With this belief no one will care to perform meritorious deeds and people will commit unwholesome actions freely. Consequently the world will not be a safe place to live and mankind will be ruined.

By Knowing just One Previous Existence One cannot Understand the Law of Kamma

The minister Alāta supported the statement of the heretic Kassapa by saying: "What Venerable Kasssapa said

http://www.dhammadownload.com

is correct. I remember my past existence. I was a very cruel butcher by the name of **Piṅgala** in Banares. I performed many unwholesome actions by killing cows, oxen, buffaloes, pigs and goats. When I died from that existence, I was born in the commander-in-chief clan. Now I become the minister in Mithilā. So there are no effects of bad actions."

[The minister Alāta did not know about his second past existence, in which he performed many meritorious deeds. Because of these good kammas, he was born in the commander-in-chief clan in the present existence. His bad kammas which he acquired in the first past existence did not have the chance to bear results yet. They lied dormant in his mental stream like an ember covered with ashes. They would bear dreadful results at an opportune time.]

At that time a poor slave by the name of **Bījaka** revered Kassapa and observed sabbath precepts nearby. When he heard what Kassapa said, he wept bitterly. When asked by the king why did he weap, he gave the answer:

"Your Majesty, I also remember my past existence. I was a very rich man by the name of **Bhāva** at Sāketa country. I performed only meritorious deeds, giving alms and observing moral precepts. I didn't remember that I had done any bad thing. When I died, I was conceived in the womb of a woman, who was a slave of a potter in Mithilā. So I was born a poor slave.

"Though I was poor, I gave half of my meal to a hungry person. I always keep sabbath precepts. I never do evil such as torturing others or stealing others property.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

But as minister Alāta said, my good deeds did not bear good fruits. I am like an unwise dice player who always lose in the game whereas the minister Alāta is like a wise dice player who always wins in the game. As I could not see the way to celestial abodes I wept on hearing Venerable Kassapa's words."

[Bījaka was a farmer at the time of Kassapa Buddha. He went to the forest in search of a lost bull. A monk got confused with the paths in the forest and asked the farmer to point out the right path. As the farmer worried about his lost bull, he remained silent. When the monk asked again, he got angry and said, "Are you a slave's son? You speak so harshly? You must be a slave's son?" So he committed a serious evil action.

But when the farmer died, that evil kamma did not have the chance to bear results. It remained dormant in his mental stream. As his good kammas produced blissful existence one after another, he became the rich man Bhāva in his immediate past life. Though he performed many meritorious deeds in the existence of Bhāva, these good kammas did not have the opportunity to function as productive kamma at his death. The evil kamma of speaking harshly to the monk when he was a farmer seaching for his lost bull in the forest acted as productive kamma. So he was born as a slave woman's son. As Bhijaka did not know about this, he had the wrong concept that good deeds did not bear good results.]

On hearing the stories of Alāta and Bhījaka, King Ingati believed Kassapa's teaching that good deeds and

http://www.dhammadownload.com

bad deeds bore no results. He regarded Kassapa as his teacher and decided to enjoy sensual pleasure to the utmost. As Kassapa had said that paying obeisance to ascetics and brahmins bore no fruits, the King didn't pay obeisance to Kassapa any more. He bade farewell to Kassapa and returned to the palace.

Evil Deeds Multiply due to Wrong View

Since King Ingati accepted the wrong view, he stopped the programme for offering alms to monks, brahmins and beggars daily and pavilions used for offering alms at the four city gates and in the middle of the city were destroyed. He let the three chief ministers, Vijaya, Sunāma and Alāta, to manage all home affairs and administrative affairs and let them decide all judicial matters. As for him, he would live freely enjoying sensual pleasure to the utmost.

Though he had many beautiful queens and female attendants, he forcibly took pretty maidens guarded by their parents and other men's wives that he liked. Previously as he ruled his kingdom according to the ten precepts incumbent on a king, the whole country was peaceful and pleasant. Now as the king committed immoral actions, his ministers and officers also committed immoral actions. Thus the whole country was in a great turmoil full of fear and dissatisfaction.

The attendants of Princess Rusā heard the bad news and told the princess. The princess was upset and very unhappy. She pondered as follows.

"Why did my father ask questions to clarify his doubt to a heretic who had no morality, no moral shame and dread

http://www.dhammadownload.com

and no clothes? Why didn't he ask monks and brahmins who had moral principles and practised meditation? I am the only person who can get rid of the wrong view from my father and establish him in the right view. Before my present existence, when I was a female celestial being, I could know my seven past existences and my seven future existences. But the present time is not the right time for me to go to my father. As usual I should go on the day before the new moon day. I will ask for the money amounting to one thousand. My father will say about his wrong view. Then I shall let him get rid of the false view."

Princess Rusā gave a Moralizing Talk to her Father

On the day before the new moon day Princess Rusā dressed herself up, put on ornaments and accompanied by five hundred attendants, went to her father.

"My dear daughter, are you happy and well? Did you enjoy living in the seven-storeyed palace with tiered roof? Did you swim in the pond with five kinds of lotus flowers? Did you get beautiful clothes and good food daily? Did you make garlands of flowers and wear them?" asked the king.

"Thank you, father, I got everything on account of your glory and loving-kindness. Tomorrow is a sabbath day when deities get together. Please give me money amounting to one thousand. I shall donate to ascetics, brahmins and beggars."

"My dear daughter, there is no benefit for giving alms. It amounts to wasting your money. Don't observe sabbath precepts also for it will bring no benefits. Don't take the

http://www.dhammadownload.com

trouble to fast after mid-day. When I was with the heretic teacher Kassapa, the slave woman's son cried bitterly after listening to the sermon of Venerable Kassapa. My dear daughter, enjoy sensual pleasure throughout your life."

"Dear father, those who associate with fools become foolish. The minister Alāta and the poor man Bījaka become foolish because they associate with the foolish heretic Kassapa. But father, you are wise and intelligent. You can consider what is beneficial and what is not beneficial, what is reasonable and what is not reasonable. Why do you revere the heratic kassapa as the minister Alāta and Bījaka do? They all have wrong view.

"Dear father, if the heratic Kassapa said that good deeds and bad deeds bear no results, why did he himself practise as a monk? The foolish, who believe that all beings will automatically become pure and emancipate from Saṁsarā when eighty four world cycles are completed, are destroying ignorant people. These foolish people cannot free themselves from wrong view. It is just like the fish which cannot get rid of a fish-hook which inflicts it.

"Dear father, I shall tell you another example. Traders put their goods little by little along the journey into a boat. When the accumulated goods become too heavy, the boat sinks in the river. Similarly foolish people accumulate evil deeds little by little until the load becomes too heavy that they sink to hell. So long as the load of immoral deeds does not become heavy enough, the minister Alāta will enjoy the present status with the support of good deeds he had performed in previous existences. When those good kammas are exhausted, the minister Alāta will be cast down

http://www.dhammadownload.com

into hell.

"Dear father, the poor man Bījaka is accumulating good deeds little by little. He is enjoying on the path to celestial abodes. At present he is a slave because of an evil deed the had done in the past. When the effect of that evil is exhausted, Bījaka will gain a blissful existence provided that he attains the right view and stops revering Kassapa.

"Dear father, if one associates with a person having a wrong view and a wrong practice, one is smeared with the evil practice. So the wise, being afraid of getting involved with evil deeds, do not associate with the wicked. If one wraps a rotten fish with a leaf, the leaf will have bad smell. On the other hand if one wraps sweet-smelling flowers with a big leaf, the leaf will be sweet-smelling. Thus the wise associate only with wise and upright persons. they do not associate with foolish, wicked persons. Foolish, wicked friends will take us to hell. Wise, upright persons will take us to celestial abodes.

"Dear father, im my previous existence, I was a female celestial being, attending to the Sakka. In that existence, I could see my seven past existences and my seven future existences. While I was wandering in Saṁsāra in the past, I was a goldsmith's son in one existence in Rājagraha city. In that existence I associatd with a wicked friend, and so I committed many evil deeds. I forcibly stole another man's wife and committed sexual misconduct. That bad deed did no bear results when I died. It remained in the mental stream like an ember covered with ashes.

"A good deed bore results: so I was born a rich man's

http://www.dhammadownload.com

son in Kosambī country. In this existence I associated with a wise friend with wide knowledge; so I performed many meritorious deeds. I observed sabbath precepts on sabbath days. When I died, however, these good deeds did not have the chance to bear results. They remained dormant as gold pots immersed in water in a well.

"When the rich man died, the *paradāra* evil deed, i.e., sexual misconduct with another man's wife, bore results. I was born in Roruva Hell and burnt in molten iron in a big cauldron for a very long time. It was so dreadful and painful that I did not feel happy even for a moment.

"When I escaped from that hell, I was born as a male goat in Biññāgata country. The two testicles of the goat were taken out due to the continuous effect of the past evil deed of sexual misconduct. As the goat was strong, it had to carry heavy load on its back and also had to pull heavy carts.

"When I died from the he-goat existence, I was born a male monkey in a deep forest. Soon after I was born as a monkey, my mother took me to the monkey king who immediately bit off my testicles. This was also the continuous result of the past evil deed of sexual misconduct.

"When I died from the monkey existence, I became a bull in Dassana division. The bull was again castrated, i.e., having testicles taken out. This was also the continuous effect of the past evil deed of sexual misconduct.

"When I died from the bull existence, I was born neither a male nor a female but a person of uncertain gender in a village headman's family in Vajjī division. Again this was the continuous effect of the past evil deed of sexual

http://www.dhammadownload.com

misconduct.

"Dear father, when I died from that existence of uncertain gender, I became a female celestial being in Nandavana garden of Tāvatiṁsā. I was an attendant of the Sakka, skilful in dancing and singing. In this existence, I knew my seven past existences and my seven future existences. In that existence and in my seven future existences, I was endowed with happiness. The seven future existences consist of six female existences and a powerful male deity existence.

"Dear father, my age is sixteen years which is a short moment in heaven or celestial realm. One hundred human years equal to one Tāvatiṁsā day. You should take note that good deeds and bad deeds do not disappear; they always follow the doer even as one's shadow that never leaves.

"Dear father, if a man wishes to be a man in his every future existence, he should avoid committing sexual misconduct with another man's wife just as a man who has washed his legs avoids mud. If a woman wishes to be a man in her every future existence, she should serve her husband faithfully as a slave.

"Dear father, if a person wishes to enjoy human happiness and celestial happiness together with many attendants, he or she should avoid all evil deeds and perform meritorious deeds as much as possible, controlling his bodily actions, verbal actions and mental actions. Those who are endowed with riches, luxury and attendants are the friends or doers of past wholesome deeds. Dear father, you have many beautiful queens and female attendeants who are as

http://www.dhammadownload.com

beautiful as celestial beings. Will you please consider why do you have them?"

Princess Rusā gave a moralizing talk to her father for the whole day and the whole night with the intention of getting rid of his wrong view and establishing him in the right view . Though she gave many sound reasons and good examples including the accounts of her life showing how strangely kammas could bear results, the king did not give up his wrong view. Just as parents are delighted to listen to their children talking pleasantly, even so did the king take delight in the pleasant talk of his lovely daughter. But he did not relinquish his wrong view.

The citizens were very happy on that day because they heard the good news that Princess Rusā would persuade the king to give up his wrong view and to rule the country justly for the welfare of all citizens. They were waiting with great expectation.

Brahmā Nārada Delivered a Sermon

Though she could not get rid of the king's wrong view, Princess Rusā did not slacken her effort. She raised her hands above her head with palms together and paid obeisance to all directions, uttering the following request.

"In the world there are monks, hermits and brahmins who keep moral principles and undertake meditation. They are relied upon and revered by human beings. May they come to this place in consideration of my moral virtues and my asseveration of the truth. With your ability and power, please deliver my father, King Ingati, from his wrong view and let him rule the country justly for the welfare and pros-

http://www.dhammadownload.com

perity of all citizens."

At that time Gotama Bodhisatta was a brahmā by the name of Nārada. It is the nature of all Bodhisattas to develop loving-kindness towards all beings and compassionately look at the world to find out persons with good character and persons with bad character. When **Brahmā Nārada** looked at the world, he heard the request of Princess Rusā. He also knew that there was no one except himself who could get rid of King Ingati's wrong view and establish him in the right view. He decided that he should descend to the human realm to confer happiness upon the king and the citizens.

As the people revered monks and hermits at that time, Brahmā Nārada assumed the form of a graceful and subline hermit. He came through the air with his body shining brightly like the full moon. He entered the sandal-wood palace and stood in the sky in front of King Ingati.

Princess Rusā paid obeisance to the hermit. King Ingati could not stay in his place on the throne on account of the power of the hermit. He descended from his place and asked the hermit:

"Venerable Hermit, your appearance is graceful as a celestial being and your body rays are like the moon rays illuminating all places. Where do you come from? What is your name?"

"Your Majesty, I came from the celestical realm letting my body rays illuminate all directions like moon rays. I am known to the people as Nārada or as Kassapa."

"You can go through the sky and you stand in the sky.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

It is very amazing and wonderful. Venerable Nārada, how did you attain this miraculous power?"

"Your Majesty, in the past I cultivated four Dhammas, namely, speaking the truth, investigating the natural truth, controlling the six faculties and giving alms. On account of these wholesome deeds I attain this miraculous power. On account of those wholesome deeds I can accomplish all my wishes with my mind."

"Venerable Hermit, you speak very confidently about the results of good deeds. If good deeds really give rise to good results, show it to me clearly."

"Your Majesty, you are giving much respect to your doubt. Tell me your doubt. I'll clarify your doubt with reasons, with cause and effect, in many ways."

"Venerable Hermit, I'll ask a question. Answer it correctly. People say that deities exist, parents exist, the present world and the next world after death also exist. Are these statements true?"

"Your Majesty, it is true that deities exist, parents exist, the present world and the next world after death also exist. Because people have lust, craving for sensual pleasure and delusion, they do not see and they do not know the next world after death."

"Venerable Hermit, if you believe that there are houses of those who have died in the next world, you lend me five hundred silver coins. When I get to the next world after death, I shall give you one thousand silver coins," the king made fun of the hermit.

"Your Majesty, if your are an upright, grateful person

http://www.dhammadownload.com

with good morality, I shall give you five hundred silver coins. But you are harsh and wicked, having the wrong view. You will be born in hell after death without money. Who will come to hell to ask for one thousand silver coins from you ?

"Your Majesty, in the human world the wise lend money only to upright persons who possess wisdom, foresight, morality and who are industrious and grateful. They will surely repay the money with interest. Only such people are invited to borrow money whenever they need it."

When Brahmā Nārada suppressed King Ingati with his speech, the latter had nothing to say and he remained silent. The Bodhisatta Brahmā let all the citizens in Mithilā, which was seven Yūjanās (56 miles) wide, hear what he said with his supernormal power. The citizens were very happy to know that the powerful brahmā was going to free the king from his wrong view.

Showing Hells and Celestial Realms

A thought arose in Brahmā Nārada to free him from his wrong view by frightening him with hell scenes and then to console him with a journey through celestial realms.

"Your Majesty, when you pass away from the present existence, you will see the denizens of hell who are attacked and bitten by crows, vultures, falcons and dogs. In that hell your whole body will be bleeding for being bitten and pierced by crows, vultures, falcons and dogs. Who would come to you to collect one thousand silver coins from you?

"Your Majesty, if you are not born in that hell, you will

http://www.dhammadownload.com

be born in Lokantrika hell. This hell is always dark as the moon and the sun do not shine there. It is totally dark and very dreadful with clamorous voices. When you are suffering miserably in that hell, who would come to you to collect one thousand silver coins from you?

"Your Majesty, if you are not born in Lokantrika hell, you will be born in another hell. Two big, fierce dogs with iron teeth will bite you and eat your flesh. Your whole body will be tattered and torn with blood dripping profusely. Who would come to you to ask for one thousand silver coins?

"Your Majesty, if you are not born in that hell, you will be born in another hell. There the hell controllers will pierce your body with spears and arrows. They will torture you miserably and split open your belly and the two sides of your body. Who would come to you to ask for one thousand silver coins?

"Your Majesty, if you are not born in that hell, you will be born in another hell. There very sharp spears, arrows, hooks and forks will rain down on your head. Red hot stone slabs and metal balls will also fall on you. Unbearably hot air will blow on you. You will not have comfort even for a moment. When you are suffering miserably in that hell, who would come to collect one thousand silver coins from you?

"Your Majesty, the men who committ sexual misconduct with other men's wives and the wives who enjoy sexual pleasure with other men beside their husbands will have to climb up trees with sharp iron thorns which cut their skin and flesh. Hell controllers also pierce them with spears.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

With bloody bodies full of wounds they have to climb up those thorny trees again. With those wounds you will be very miserable, breathing heavily and wearily. Who would come to that hell to collect one thousand silver coins from you?

"Your Majesty, the hell trees are lined up with sharp knives, swords and iron spikes. They grow so tall that they touch the clouds. You will have to climb up those trees. You will fall from those trees into a stream called *Vetaranī*. The stream water is hot molten iron covered with sharp lotus leaves like knives. You will have to swim very miserably in that stream. Who would come to that hell to collect one thousand silver coins from you."

On hearing the terrible states of various hells where he would be tortuned for aeons, King Ingati was very much frightened and he apologised as follows.

"Venerable Hermit, on hearing your description about various hells where evil doers have to suffer, I am so much shaken that I feel like a tree cut from the roots. I feel so dazed and wavering that I do not know directions any more. I feel remorseful many times and I am terribly frightened. I have committed evil deeds. Venerable Hermit, may you be my object of worship and reverence. Please guide me and show me the way to go to blissful abodes before I fall down to woeful abodes."

"Your Majesty, in the past king Dhataraṭṭha, King Vessamitta, King Aṭṭhaka, King Yamadaggi, King Usiṅdhara and King Sivirāja were lay devotees and donors and they served monks and brahmins. When they died, they were born in celestial realms. Your Majesty, avoid evil and un-

http://www.dhammadownload.com

just actions. Always act justly. Prepare food and drinks and keep them ready in front of your palace to be offered to hungry and thirsty persons. Give flowers, perfumes, clothings, slippers and umbrellas to those who need them every morning and evening. Don't let others' old houses, old cattle and old horses be ruined. Those, who have served you with physical strength and knowledge but now can no longer serve you due to old age, should be provided with provisions and attendants as before." Thus Hermit Nārada pointed out ancient kings' practice.

The Simile of a Chariot that Fulfils all Wishes

The Bodhisatta Brahmā Nārada, having described about alms giving and observing morality to King Ingati, depicted the simile of a chariot so that the king could understand and appreciate.

"Your Majesty, regard your body as a chariot, your mind as the charioteer, loving-kindness as the axle of the chariot, criticism and distinguishing right and wrong as load support, your legs as the chariot wheels, your hands as the chariot handrails, your stomach as the hub, your voice as the sound of the chariot.

"Your Majesty, regard the truth you speak as the uniform quality of the chariot, the harmonious speech without slandering as the flag set up at the front of the chariot, the gentle and tender words you speak as the smooth function of the chariot parts, the worthy and suitable words you speak as the chariot decoration, your faith and frugality as the well-made chariot, your humbleness and reverence as the pins which secure the shaft of the chariot to the axle-

http://www.dhammadownload.com

tree, your becoming mellowed in temperament and bowing low as the shaft of the chariot, and your observing morality as the thong for tying the yoke to the shaft.

'Your Majesty, not to be angry, not to kill, not to torture and to be just should be regarded as the white umbrella set up in the chariot. Also regard wide knowledge as the back-rest, mental serenity as the flooring, knowing the right time as the strange ornament of the chariot, bravery as the forked prop placed under the yoke, mindfulness as the chariot spear, and mental concentration as the rope pulled by the charioteer.

"Your Majesty, just as you can go on any journey you like after harnessing good horses to the chariot, even so can you go to Nibbāna only with pure and cultured mind. The path of intense craving for sensual pleasure leads to the woeful abodes. Controlling bodily actions, verbal actions and mental actions is the straight path that leads to celestial abodes. When the chariot representing the body is running on the road made up of visible objects, sound, odour, taste and tangible object, it must be controlled by the goad of wisdom so that it will not sway and swing from side to side. In that chariot representing the body your mind is the charioteer.

"Your Majesty, if you are well established in good practice with good serenity and good mindfulness, you will go not to woeful abodes but to celestial realms with such a chariot".

Brahmā Nārada admonished King Ingati in this way and let him relinquish his wrong view, let him observe moral precepts, let him forsake bad friends, let him associate with

http://www.dhammadownload.com

good friends and let him strive diligently. He praised Princess Rusā. He also admonished the queens, their female attendants and their followers. Then with great supernormal power he went to Brahmā realm, displaying an amazing sight to the people.

To wind up this unique Jātaka Story, King Ingati of that time became the hermit Uruvela Kassapa during the time of Gotama Buddha; the minister Alāta became Devadatta; the minister Sunāma became Baddazi; the minister Vijaya became Venerable Sāriputta; the poor man Bījaka became Venerable Maha-Mogallāna; the naked heretic Kassapa became the Licchavī prince Sunakkhat; Princess Rusā became Venerable Ānanda; and Brahmā Nārada became Gotama Buddha.

3 Why Some Prosper with Bad Deeds and Some are Poor in spite of Good Deeds

At the present time there are many people who are prosperous with bad deeds and also many people who are poor in spite of doing good deeds.

In one quarter of our town Mr. Ba Khet conducts his business immorally. Yet he is very rich with a big house and saloon cars. On the other hand Mr. Hla Aung is a high-school teacher. He takes much trouble to teach his students with good intention. He observes sabbath precepts on sabbath days. Yet he remains a tenant having difficulty to make both ends meet. How should we explain these matters?

They can be easily explained by economic principles. If Mr. Ba Khet is doing a business, wholesome or unwhole-

http://www.dhammadownload.com

some, which producers great profit, he will be rich. As for Mr. Hla Aung, his teacher salary is low and he doesn't do other jobs to get extra money. So he will be poor. If he works hard to become a popular tuition teacher, giving tuition to many groups of students, he will be rich very soon.

But in terms of kammas, Mr. Ba Khet is accumulating many bad kammas which will send him to woeful abodes. The human life-span is very short. After enjoying human riches for a few years, if one has to suffer in a woeful state for aeons, it is really worthless and fruitless, and it should not be done. As for Mr. Hla Aung., he is accumulating good kammas which will bear pleasant fruits in many future existences. We should not be short-sighted, looking for just the present welfare; we should be far-sighted, planning for many successive blissful existences.

We have seen in Nārada Jātaka how strangely kammas bear results. The poor man Bījaka, in his far past existence, was searching for his lost bull when a monk asked him to point out the right path. When the monk asked him again, he angrily said, "Are you a slave's son? You spoke so harshly. You must be a slave's son." So he commited a serious verbal action.

But this bad Kamma remained dormant in his mental stream like an ember covered with ashes while other good kammas were bearing results, generating pleasant existences. Only when the rich man Bhāva died, did it have the chance to generate a new existence, giving rise to the poor existence of Bījaka, the son of a slave woman. Though Bījaka performed meritorious deeds, the effect of this bad kamma could not be stopped and he remained poor.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

+ + +

In Rājagraha city the pig slaughter **Cunda** lived near Veluvana monastery. At the harvest time, he went to one village after another with his cart, exchanging paddy with piglets. He set free the piglets in a large compound behind his house. He fed them with just enough food. He killed one grown up pig very cruelly everyday. He tied the legs of the pig at four stakes driven to the ground. He kept the mouth of the pig open by propping up with a stick pointed at both ends. He beat the hole body of the pig with a heavy club to make its flesh tender.

Then he poured boiling water into the mouth of the pig until clear water came out of the anus. Again he poured boiling water over the body of the pig and peeled off the outer skin. Then he cut the throat of the pig and collected the blood with a bucket. He cut off the best meat and soaked it in the blood. He gave the meat to his wife to cook for the family. He sold the rest of the meat in the market.

So Cunda lived happily in this manner for fifty years. Then he fell ill. The unwholesome kammas that he had accumulated were so many that his past good kammas could not stop them from bearing results. Avīci hell fire came up and burnt his intestines. It was many times hotter and more painful than the pain the pigs had to suffer when he poured boiling water into their intestines.

As it was so painful that he cried out like a pig and crawled on the floor of his house on his hands and legs like a pig from this side to that side again and again. His sons and daughters felt ashamed and asked him, "Daddy, don't

http://www.dhammadownload.com

cry. It's so shameful." They could not stop him and they could not control him. He couldn't stay still. He kept on crawling and crying out like a pig for seven days.

When the monks passed by, they heard the cry like a pig. So they told the Buddha, "Venerable Sir, Cunda, the butcher, closed the doors of his house and has been killing pigs for seven days. He might hold a special ceremony at his house. But it is so cruel to kill pigs day and night."

"O monks, Cunda has not been killing pigs. He has been suffering in the way he has done his bad kammas. Avīci hell fire has been burning his intestines for seven days. As he could not bear the pain, he has been crying like a pig. Today he died and he was now in Avīvi."

Evil Deeds will never Bear Good Results

When I gave a lecture on Kamma, I ususlly told a story. In a village there were two friends called **Mr. Ba** and **Mr. Hla**, Mr. Ba staged cock fight and bull fight, took alcoholic drinks and played cards. He did all bad things. Mr. Hla was pious. He went to pagodas and monasteries, observed sabbath precepts and gave his service to the monks.

On a sunny day they went up the mountain together to gather mushrooms. At a steep place both of them slipped and fell down. Mr. Hla fell in a prone position and had a cut in the forehead with blood flowing out. Mr. Ba rolled several turns and stopped under a bamboo grove. When he opened his eyes, he saw three pieces of gold and picked them up.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

Mr. Hla was not satisfied. When he found a well composed monk, he paid obeisance to the monk and said, "Venerable sir, I perform many meritorious deeds such as visiting pagodas and monasteries, keeping precepts and serving monks. Yet when I fell down at the steep hill side, I got a cut in the forehead. My friend Mr. Ba performed many demeritorious deeds, staging cock fight and bull fight, playing cards and taking alcoholic drinks. Yet when he fell down, he got three pieces of gold. I am not satisfied, sir."

The monk looked with his supernormal power and said, "Lay devotee, in your past existence you quarrelled with a man and killed him. That immoral kamma bore results at the time of your falling. You were destined to die, but your meritorious deeds protected you. So you had just a cut. On the other hand, Mr. Ba built a bamboo hut and donated it to a monk. At the time of his falling, he was destined to get three gold pots as the result of his past good kamma. But because of his present immoral actions, he got just three pieces of gold."

Mr. Hla was satisfied. Without knowing the past kammas, we should not decide on the basīs of the present evidences only.

* *Unwholesome deeds never bear good results. They bear only bad results.*
* *Wholesome deeds never bear bad results. They bear only good results.*
* *Do not disregard evil, saying, "It will not come nigh to me"; by the falling of drops even a water-jar is filled; likwise the fool,*

http://www.dhammadownload.com

gathering little by little, fills himself with evil. *(Dhammapada 121)*

* *Do not disregard merit, saying, "It will not come nigh to me"; by the falling of drops even a water-jar is filled; likewise the wise man, gathering little by little, fills himself with good.* *(Dhammpada 122)*
* *Even an evil-doer sees good as long as evil ripens not; but when it bears fruit, then he sees the evil results.* *(Dhammapada 119)*
* *Even a good person sees evil so long as good ripens not; but when it bears fruit, then he sees the good results.* *(Dhammapada 120)*
* *As sweet as honey is an evil deed, so thinks the fool so long as it ripens not; but when it ripens, then he comes to grief.* *(Dhammapada 69)*

4 To be Rich and Prosperous in Every Existence

People want to be prosperous in the present existence. They also want to be rich and prosperous in future existences. If they want to be so, they can apply the Law of Kamma and prepare their fate and fortune. They can make use of the formula of success: "Kamma-wisdom-effort", developing them simultaneously and evenly.

Kamma is volitional action. In Buddhism good actions and bad actions are definitely pointed out by the Buddha. Any action, which hurts someone, either oneself or others or both, is guilty and unwholesome. It will bear bad

http://www.dhammadownload.com

results. Any action, which does not hurt anyone, is blameless, faultless and wholesome. It will bear good results.

Basically the **'ten immoral conducts'** *(ducaritas* **or** *akusalakammapathas)* are unwholesome. Avoidance of these ten immoral actions amounts to 'ten moral actions' or 'ten moral conducts' *(sucaritas* **or** *kusalakamma pathas)*.

According to the essential guidance of the Buddha: ***'Avoid evil, do good, and purify the mind,"*** we must avoid ten immoral actions and perform ten moral actions. To do so, we need to observe five moral precepts called **'Pañca Sīla'** diligently.

To be more safe and secure and to get greater benefits, we take threefold refuge together with Pañca Sīla. Thus **the first step towards prosperity and happiness is "Taking threefold refuge and observing five moral precepts."**

The Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṁgha known as **"Triple Gem"** are the most precious jewels and the greatest powers. If we really revere the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṁgha and take refuge in them, we are protected from all dangers and we acquire billions of good powerful kammas which will prevent us from being born in hell. Furthermore, if we sincerely revere the Triple Gem, we shall willingly and diligently keep 'Pañca Sīla'.

The wholesome kamma acquired by keeping Threefod Refuge and observing Pañca Sīla are so powerful that they can obstruct ordinary unwholesome kammas not to bear results. The gate-keeper, **Dhammila,** caught fish everyday with a fishing rod. His wife exchanged some fish with

http://www.dhammadownload.com

rice and some with butter. She cooked the rice and the remaining fish. They made a living in this manner for fifty years.

As Dhammila became old, he fell ill. When the monk from the hill monastery came to their house, his wife apologized that they had no food to offer. The monk asked permission to see Dhammila and administered Pañca Sīla to him. But after taking Threefold Refuge, Dhammila could not open his mouth any more. The monk left and went on alms round. When he got back to his monastery, a devotee with shining body appeared suddenly and paid him obeisance.

"Who are you? " asked the monk.

"I am Dhammila, venerable sir."

"Where are you now?"

"I am in the upper Mahārajika realm. I thank you heartily for administering me Threefold Refuge. If I could also take Pañca Sīla, I shall be in a higher celestial realm, sir."

Thus the wholesome kammas which arise from taking Threefold Refuge are very powerful and reliable. They can obstruct the unwholesome kammas accumulated in fifty years of fishing from bearing results and produce their own good results.

Good Kamma is more Powerful than Bad Kamma

The learned King **Milinda** asked the Arahant **Venerable Nāgasena,** "Sir, you said that the unwholesome kamma of killing a fish can produce woeful rebirth. Now Dhammila killed many fish, took Threefold Refuge just

http://www.dhammadownload.com

before death and he was born in a celestial realm. I cannot believe it."

The answer given by the learned Arahant is very notable.

"Your Majesty, if you throw a small stone into water, what will happen?"

"The stone will sink."

"If you throw a big stone into water, what will happen?

"It will also sink."

"Right. Since the stone is denser than water, it will sink in water. It does not matter whether it is big or small. Similarly the kamma of killing a sentient being, no matter whether it is big or small, will produce woeful rebirth if it has the chance to bear results at the time of death. But suppose that you build a big ship and put five cart-load of stones into the ship. Will the ship sink?"

"No, it will not sink."

"As it does not sink, can it travel to a desired destination?"

"Yes, it can."

"The same principle applies here. The wholesome kamma of taking Threefold Refuge is powerful. It resembles a big ship. The unwholesome kamma of killing a fish resembles a small stone. As the ship can carry many pieces of stone and travel to a desired destination, so too the wholesome kamma of taking Threefold Refuge can produce celestial rebirth in spite of the presence of many unwholesome kammas."

" It is very reasonable, venerable sir."

http://www.dhammadownload.com

Let Kamma, Wisdom and Effort Be Balanced

To balance Kamma, wisdom and effort, one must know the unique attributes of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṁgha. Since they are the noblest objects of veneration, the wholesome kammas developed by paying obeisance to them and by taking Threefold Refuge are very powerful. One should tell children stories describing the benefits of Threefold Refuge as well as the noble attributes of the Triple Gem so that they can venerate the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṁgha with wisdom.

Again to enable children to venerate the Triple Gem with great effort, they should be taught to reflect on one attribute of the Buddha such as *"Arahaṁ"* again and again. This is called *"Buddhānussati"* or *"Recollection of the Buddha"*. They should learn to do it properly as it gives rise to great wholesome kammas. During the time of the Buddha, a boy could protect himself from being eaten by an ogre by just reciting *"Namo Buddhassa"* (I pay homage to the Buddha).

When they grow old enough to go to kindergarter, they should be taught to love animals and to develop loving-kindness to all beings. Then they should be taught to observe five moral precepts. It is noble to avoid killing, stealing, lying, taking intoxicants and commiting sexual misconduct as these immoral actions are against loving-kindness and social security. They should be told notable stories describing the benefits of morality, which is the most valuable quality of a person. If a person can keep Threefold Refuge and Moral Precepts diligently, he has the best in life. He cannot be poor; he will be rich. He will also attain

http://www.dhammadownload.com

blissful successive existences in the future.

In 'Kamma, wisdom and effort,' wisdom is the leader. The basic-essential wisdom is the knowledge of kamma and its result. So one must understand fully the knowledge of kamma to possess **"the right view"** *(Sammādiṭṭhi)*. This knowledge will multiply wholesome kammas and send one to celestial abode after death.

When one grows to school age, one must strive to acquire modern education. This is in accord with the teachings of the Buddha.

Bāhusaccañ ca – to have wide knowledge,
Sippañ ca – to be skilful in technology and handicrafts,
Vinayo ca susikkhito – to learn the rules of conduct and disciplines and abide by them,
Subhāsita ca yāvācā – to speak what is true, pleasant and beneficial –

these are the highest blessings. If one can acquire a professional knowledge skillfully like Bill Gates, one can be instantly rich and properous.

After getting good knowledge and a good job, one should strive on to attain the other highest blessings.

Mātāpitu upaṭṭhānaṁ – to support one's parents and attend to them closely,
Puttadārassa saṅgaho – to take care of one's wife and children
Anākulā ca kammantā – to perform a faultless and wholesome work at a proper time,
Dānañ ca - to perform acts of charity,

http://www.dhammadownload.com

Dhammacariyā ca – to live righteously performing ten kinds of meritorious deeds,

Ñātakānañ ca saṅgaho – to support one's relatives,

Anavajjāni kammāni – to keep sabbath precepts and perform social work for the welfare of all –

these are also the highest blessings. To acquire these blessings are very noble, enjoyable and honorable. All the blessings will lead to successive blissful existences.

Kālena dhamma savanaṁ – to listen to and study the dhamma, i.e., the teachings of the Buddha,

Kālena dhamma sākacchā – to discuss the dhamma with learned persons at proper time,

Tapo ca – to practise austerity by controlling one's sense faculties.

Brahma cariyañ ca – to undertake the Noble Practice of developong morality, mental concentration and higher wisdom in a meditation centre,

Ariyā saccāna dassanaṁ – to realize the four Noble Truths with the powerfold Path-wisdom,

Nibbāna sacchikiriyā ca – to realize Nibbāna and enjoy the highest eternal bliss —

these are the highest blessings attainable in the present life. Buddhism is still flourishing in Theravāda countries and there are qualified teachers who can teach meditators to develop the highest wisdom called "Path-wisdom".

http://www.dhammadownload.com

If one attains this wisdom, one shall become a noble person *(Ariyā)* and can enjoy the eternal supreme bliss of Nibbāna. He can live happily with his family with complete assurance that he will never be reborn in woeful abodes. He has entered the stream leading to Nibbāna and he will arrive there sooner or later.

5 Let us Swim across Saṁsāra together till We Reach the Safe Shore

That we can manage our fate and fortune to attain the kind of existence we like by making use of the kamma energy which is more powerful than the atomic energy is the most pleasant news. If lovers with identical intention and identical desire willingly perform wholesome deeds together and wish to be together through thick and thin throughout Saṁsāra, they can be together life after life while they are struggling to gain emancipation from all suffering.

The hermit **Sumedha** and the brahmin maiden **Sumittā** set the example by performing meritorious deeds, offering lotus flowers and paying obeisance to Dīpaṅkarā Buddha together and wishing to be together throughout the long period of four incalculable aeons and one thousand world cycles which was the shortest period for a Bodhisatta to fulfil perfections and to strive on continuously to become a Buddha. They were husband and wife in many existences until the final existence when they were **Prince Siddhattha** and **Princess Yasodarā** who were married, begetting a son, **Rāhula.** They all passed away happily to Nibbāna.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

With the help of kamma property we can become very rich like the rich man **Jotika**, or we can enjoy an inflow of gifts in money or kind like **Venerable Sīvali**, or we can become men of great wisdom like **King Miliṅda** and **Venerable Nāgasena**, or one can become exceptionally beautiful like **Ommādantī**, or one can become a maiden with exceptionally gentle touch like **Pañcapāpī**.

We should recite and reflect **Abhiṇha Sutta** every day and right.

Ahaṁ - I am
kammassakā - the owner of my kamma,
kammadāyadā - the heir of my kamma,
kammayoni - having kamma as the cause of suffering and happiness,
kammabandhū - having kamma as my kin,
kammappaṭissarano - having kamma as my refuge.
Kalyāṇaṁ vā - Whether it is wholesome, or
pāpakaṁ vā - whether it is unwholesome,
yaṁ kammaṁ karissāmi - whatever kamma that I do,
tassa kammassa bhavissāmi - I shall be the heir of that kamma,

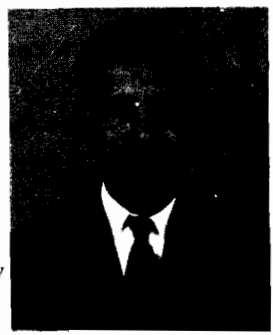
To live happily and prosperously in blissful realms life after life throughout Saṁsāra we should make the knowledge of kamma and its result our guiding torch and perform meritorious deeds willingly, joyfully and diligently to accumulate wholesome kammas and to purify the mind until we attain the supreme eternal bliss called Nībbāra.

28-9-2006 **Dr. Mehm Tin Mon**

http://www.dhammadownload.com

Short Biography of Dr. Mehm Tin Mon

Dr. Mehm Tin Mon
B.Sc.Hons.(Ygn), M.Sc.,
Ph.D.(USA)
Mahāsaddhamma Jotikadaja
Adviser to the
Ministry of Religious Affairs
Professor in International
Theravāda Buddhist Missionary
University, Yangon



Dr. Mehm Tin Mon is a scholar in chemistry as well as in Buddhism. He combined science teaching with social religious activities throughout his university teaching career for 37 years.

After retiring as Professor of Chemistry, he became Adviser to the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Professor in the International Theravāda Buddhist Missionary University, Yangon. He has been serving his country in these two capacities since 1993.

He has been ardently teaching Buddha Abhidhamma and Buddhist meditation and giving public lectures on Buddhism in Myanmar and abroad for many years. He was awarded the distinguished religious title of ' Mahasaddhamma Jotikadaja ' in 2003 by the Government of the Union of Myanmar for his outstanding contribution to the propagation of Buddhism in Myanmar and abroad.

http://www.dhammadownload.com

He has written 20 books on education , 50 books on Buddhism and about 200 articles in magazines and journals. His clear thinking, delightful teaching and simple clear style of writing have won the admiration of many listeners and readers.

He is also the President of International Pauk Forest Sāsana Centres where Samatha and Vipassanā Meditation are taught and practised in detail as expounded by the Blessed One.

http://www.dhammadownload.com